

ENGLISH AND AFRIKAANS IN DISTRICT SIX:
A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY

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To my mother and the memory of my father
and to the people of District Six

ABSTRACT

This is a descriptive study of the use of English and Afrikaans in Cape Town's District Six - a large inner-city neighbourhood, first settled in the 1840s and, by the implementation of a series of laws, depopulated and almost entirely razed during the 1970s. Each language has a history of having been both a lingua franca and a home language in that area. As lingua francas, both languages were used instrumentally by large numbers of people who had little or no concern with the promotion and preservation of the standard dialects of the languages as a part of maintaining their own identity in the multilingual, multicultural context of the city. The effects of this can be seen in contemporary vernacular English and Afrikaans which differ markedly from the standard dialects, and, it can be argued, show linguistic signs of this long period of language contact. The history of language contact was reconstructed through the use of primary and secondary written resources and oral history records.

The distribution of socio-economic power and privilege has not been equal among speakers of the two languages in South Africa as a whole. The cross-currents of discrimination and oppression have affected contemporary attitudes towards the two languages and their dialects in complex ways, producing some clear patterns but also ambivalence and contradictions. This thesis examines those aspects of the history of English and Afrikaans in District Six which have a bearing on current attitudes, practices and dialect features in the segment of District which escaped demolition. Interviews and observation were used to investigate the effects of that history and of geographic and socio-

economic factors on the linguistic repertoire of the remaining section of the community.

The study is in three sections. The first section (chapters one and two) establishes the grounds for regarding the residents as constituting a community, accounts for the choice of research method, and sets the community's context, both historical and contemporary. Contemporary attitudes towards standard English and Afrikaans and towards the local dialects are presented as they were expressed in interviews. Section 2 (chapters 3 to 5) examines the use of language in three domains: neighbourhood and home; schools; community events. Material for these chapters comes from interviews, observation and tape-recording.

Section 3 (chapters 6 and 7) concentrates on discourse and linguistic features of code-switching, and concludes with a coda outlining directions for future research. The focus of the third section is on the codes themselves, and questions concerning the relationship between code-switching and turn-changing in conversation are addressed, as are the theoretical and metatheoretical issues that surround the attempt to identify and analyse grammatical constraints on code-switching in this corpus of data. The striking feature of the corpus is the degree of convergence between the non-standard dialects of English and Afrikaans, which undermines established practice in the examination of code-switched utterances for the operation of grammatical constraints. The effect is to demand a fundamental reassessment of the possibility of identifying switch-points and of pursuing analysis which depends on that identification.

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NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION

I have not used the same transcription conventions throughout: where the focus of quoted extracts is on content (as in Chapter 2, 3.1 and 4), the speakers are indicated by letters of the alphabet, quotations are not numbered, and they are punctuated for ease of reading. Where the focus is on the language itself (as in 3.2, and in Chapters 5, 6 and 7), speakers are indicated only in those extracts of dialogue where it is important to distinguish speakers from one another, extracts are numbered (the first digit signifying the chapter, and the second the number of the example within that chapter's sequence). These extracts are not punctuated, as punctuation constitutes a kind of classification of structures and in these sections I want to present data in as 'raw' a form as possible.

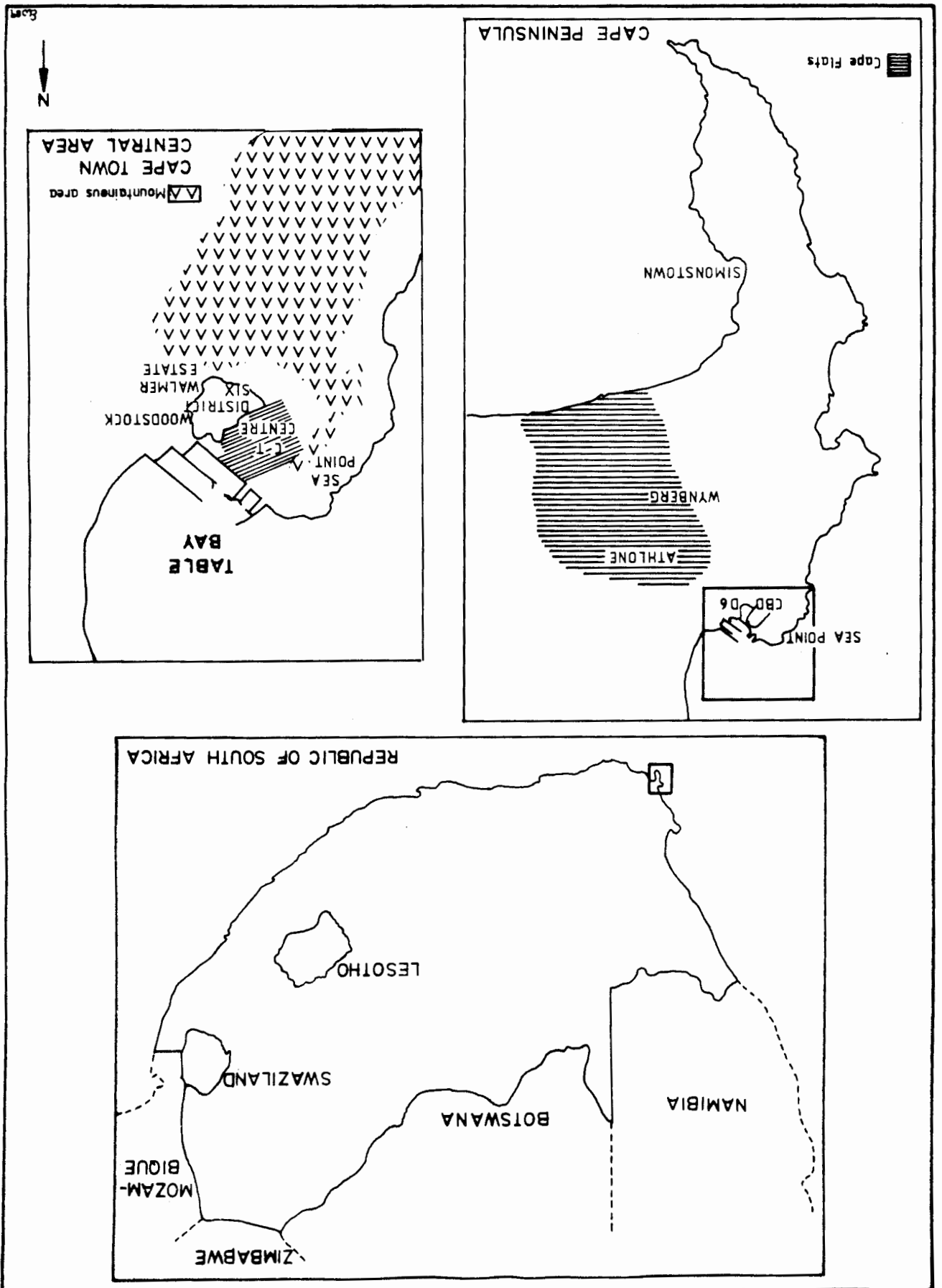
Where contracted forms and certain pronunciations are socially marked to the extent that they are given a non-standard orthographic form in local literature, I have used that non-standard form, e.g. *daai* in place of *daardie* [that].

I have used italics for Afrikaans and roman print for English. Where the orthographic form of a word is the same in both languages, the type face will indicate whether the word was pronounced as an English word or as an Afrikaans one (in cases where the distinction is clear), and in Chapters 6 and 7 notes indicate what the distinctive features of the pronunciations are. Where there is no difference in pronunciation, in Chapters where the focus is on the content of the

quotation, I have regarded the word as belonging to the language of the rest of the phrase in which it appears, and have used the appropriate type-face. In Chapters where the focus is primarily on the language itself, I have discussed the problems raised by the lack of identifiable phonological clues. In deciding which words to italicize I have, of course, run into a theoretical mine-field on the issue of borrowing. This issue and its implications are discussed at length in Chapter 7. My practice in deciding which words to italicize has been based on two criteria: (i) if the word is part of standard Afrikaans, it has been italicized; (ii) if there is a standard Afrikaans alternative (to the word that has actually been used), and if the word that has been used would be recognised by a speaker of standard English as an English word, then the word has not been italicized, e.g. '*Ek sal* notice' [I would notice]. Where Afrikaans affixes have been attached to such words these are given in italics, e.g. '*gechange*'. By following this guideline, I am able to give a visual impression of the mixing of the two languages from an outsider's point of view, but as the discussion in Chapter 6 indicates, my choice of type-face is not intended to indicate whether or not the speaker would consider the word as a borrowing. In most cases I have no way of knowing that.

The decision about what to translate was easier to make: I translated all words that I thought someone unfamiliar with Afrikaans would not know. (The Afrikaans words in the appendices are not translated.)

FIG. 1 LOCATION OF DISTRICT SIX, CAPE TOWN



INTRODUCTION

'Kom aan [Come on] Hettie, let's move up to the circle.'

It was on the bus which runs between Sea Point and Wynberg that I overheard a conversation in mixed English and Afrikaans which concluded with the suggestion quoted above. In my first week in Cape Town, this was my introduction to bilingualism and bus apartheid, Cape Town style. On this bus route, during the years in which there was some form of segregation in public transport, passengers classified as 'coloured' had to sit upstairs or in the two back rows downstairs for the section of the route through predominantly 'white' areas from Sea Point to Adderley Street in the centre of Cape Town. From there on, using the same ticket, they could sit wherever they liked. (This kind of bus was commonly referred to by its users as 'the Chameleon' - see O'Toole 1973:19). Hence the speaker's suggestion to her friend as we drew up in Adderley Street that they should move up to the prestigious seats, 'the circle'. It was not only the wit that made this sentence memorable, it was also the language switching.

Where I had lived before (on the East Rand and in the Pietermaritzburg area) among people who were bilingual in Afrikaans and English, and Zulu and English respectively, competent speakers of the languages kept them separate, seldom switching for reasons other than to accommodate interlocutors. In Cape Town, however, it was clear from conversations overheard in public places, that language switching was common, that accommodating participants' language strengths was only one of the factors eliciting code-switching: speakers often used the

English and Afrikaans words for the same thing in one conversation. So why, I wondered, did they switch? What was the switching for? What did it signify? It was only some years later that I understood one aspect of the meaning of switching to English, an aspect that Hettie's companion might or might not have been aware of when she switched to English to talk about moving up to the circle: for many Capetonians English has higher prestige. In fact, moving up to the privileged seats in social and economic life may entail not just the need to switch to English in particular circumstances, but shifting to English as a home language. It also became clear, however, that not everyone who had adopted English as their main language had abandoned either Afrikaans or the local way of mixing languages. I wondered why the other codes were retained, and when it was that people preferred to use them. I noticed too that families of different social classes, living in different areas, switched languages when they were talking among themselves at home, but that outside the home, as a general neighbourhood phenomenon, language switching was found only in certain areas. It was not clear what the factors were that created the environment in which language mixing and switching prospered. What was clear was that the sociolinguistic situation obtaining in Cape Town was very complex even if one considered only the two official languages, their spheres of use and their speakers.

Attempts to study the situation have to take cognizance of the history which generated it and also of the current context which sustains it and which affects the range of choice of viable research methods, as I shall indicate in Chapter 1.

The complexity of one bilingual community's linguistic repertoire is the focus of this three-part study. The first part (Chapters 1 and 2) concerns the historical and contemporary context of the use of English and Afrikaans, and it deals with the attitudes towards those languages which the context has helped to form. The second part (Chapters 3, 4 and 5) examines the deployment of the community's linguistic codes in different domains of neighbourhood life. The analysis in the last section (Chapters 6 and 7) is of a different kind. The focus here is on the features of dual language conversations: (i) possible and actual ways of alternating codes between and within conversational turns, and (ii), the lexical and morpho-syntactic features of the codes involved such conversations. The attempt to do this kind of analysis uncovered a number of important practical, theoretical and metatheoretical problems which are also addressed in the third part of the thesis.

I think that there are elements in my analysis that could have explanatory power in the study of some other local speech communities, but I have not extended their application here.

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXT, CONCEPTS AND METHOD

This chapter starts with a brief description of distinctive features of sociolinguistic relationships in Cape Town and of my initial attempts to research aspects of them. The second section discusses notions of 'community' and 'speech community' and my use of these concepts. The final section deals with the methodological approach adopted for this study of a particular speech community.

1.1 DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIPS IN CAPE TOWN

In Cape Town there has been contact between English and Dutch and then later Afrikaans, for almost two centuries, and of one these languages has always been politically or economically dominant, speakers of indigenous languages other than Afrikaans having been kept powerless. Dutch / Afrikaans and English were the languages of the powerful groups but it would be a mistake to think of them as being the languages of the dominant classes only. For extended periods each served as a lingua franca for some of the oppressed people and later became their home language. Such people, whose motivation in learning a language is primarily instrumental, seldom have much emotional investment in that language's symbolic 'purity', whereas it can be central in its native speakers' sense of their identity. This difference is important in understanding the extent to which, in cosmopolitan Cape Town, language contact has left its mark on the phonology,

lexis and syntax of both English and Afrikaans in different speech communities.

The complexity of attitudes prevailing among Capetonians to the two languages, their dialects and their speakers becomes intelligible in the light of the history of the unequal distribution of power and privilege between the two languages, as well as among groups of speakers within each language. What is crucial in understanding English-Afrikaans relationships is that not all native-speakers of the two languages benefited equally from their language's periods of dominance: there is and always has been discrimination of some kind between groups of speakers within each language group, some having enjoyed full political and civil rights and others not. This discriminatory distribution of power, which is now embodied in numerous statutes, has had a long history.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Dutch, the language of slave owners, served as a lingua franca between slaves and their owners, and also among the slaves who came from Ceylon, Bengal, the East Indies, Madagascar and parts of East and West Africa. Slaves gradually adopted Dutch as their home language but this did not have as a necessary consequence the gaining of equal status with Dutch speakers of European descent. Nor did this happen to those speakers of the Khoi and San languages who adopted Dutch, even if they were not slaves. In some respects, however, discrimination on grounds of colour was not strong:

schools accepted pupils from different ethnic or race groups and intermarriage was not taboo.

Cape Dutch came to differ quite extensively from dialects of Dutch spoken in Europe and it had relatively low prestige (Nienaber and Nienaber 1958:8, Raidt 1980:137-153). (It was only in the early twentieth century that both its official position and its status improved: it was declared a language in its own right, called Afrikaans, and given recognition as an official language with status equal to that of English.)

With the advent of British colonial rule at the Cape in the nineteenth century came some liberalising measures, such as Ordinance 50 of 1828, which gave equality before the law to all free people. At the same time, however, other kinds of equality were being denied, ostensibly on a linguistic basis: the anglicization policies of Cradock and Somerset privileged English over Dutch, reserving civil service posts for people fluent in English, and providing for free education through the medium of English only. Somerset also tried to use the churches to promote anglicization: he recruited English-speaking Presbyterian ministers from Scotland to fill vacant posts in the Dutch Calvinist churches (Nienaber and Nienaber 1958:9-13).

The emancipation of slaves in 1836 did not lead to equality of all British subjects in all aspects of citizenship. The franchise criteria which were established and periodically

revised, operated in such a way as to retain power in the hands of white middle-class males (see Lewis 1987:9). Working-class or peasant speakers of English, Cape Dutch / Afrikaans and other languages could seldom meet the literacy and property requirements, and women of all language groups and classes were disqualified by their sex. (For fuller discussion of discrimination on class and colour lines during the period of English political dominance, see Bickford-Smith 1988.) I wish to treat in more detail one instance of this kind of discrimination: discriminatory education. I have chosen to focus on it because in the twentieth century English is often held to be the language of education, and by implication, of freedom from severe material deprivation of the kind that haunts the uneducated and the unskilled. People interviewed for my study believe very strongly that English opens the doors of good education - and it is as well to remember that it has had a tainted history in that regard.

It is true that far more provision for schooling was made under British colonial rule than previously (Hodgson 1975:31-62). A high proportion of the nineteenth and early twentieth century schools in Cape Town were run by Christian denominations using English. Their schools were of two kinds: those called 'church schools' which charged higher fees and were better equipped, and those called 'mission schools' which charged lower fees and were not as well equipped nor as academic in their curricula. Inevitably the church schools were attended by middle-class children while children of workers went to the mission schools.

There was a high but not total correlation between class and colour. The incompleteness of segregation by colour, particularly at the mission schools, was a matter of concern to some powerful whites, and they set about completing the process in Cape Town's schools. English- and Dutch- or Afrikaans-speaking children started to be separated not so much on language as on colour lines. It is instructive to see the way in which the implementation of educational segregation was reported by the Cape of Good Hope Education Commission (1912:7). It is listed under Part 11: Progress:

Section 9 Separation between coloured and white children almost complete.

In the schools themselves the most striking change which has been made since 1891 is the separation of European and coloured children. No strong feeling about this had been manifested before 1891, but the change, which was strongly urged by Sir Langham Dale in 1891, has certainly commended itself to public opinion - at any rate, among the Europeans. The differentiation between white and coloured children in the school statistics was first made at the beginning of 1894...

(Segregated education did not, in fact, commend itself to all 'Europeans' - see Bickford-Smith 1988:311-314.)

During the 19th century English replaced Dutch as the language of government, state institutions, and commercial traffic in the city centre. Immigration swelled the population. Speakers of Cape Dutch, of Yiddish and other European languages, and of African languages from within and beyond the colony, all needed to learn English for trade and employment purposes in the harbour city.

During the 20th Century, after the creation of the Union of South Africa, the balance of power between white English and Afrikaans speakers began to shift, a shift which was crystalised by the beginning of an uninterrupted period of Afrikaner nationalist rule in 1948. The first six decades of the twentieth century saw the statutory and de facto discrimination which had existed under British rule translated into legislation that was rigidly enforced. More areas of life came to be affected by segregation. Thousands of English and Afrikaans speaking people, regarded by the dominant whites as 'non-white', lost their voting rights, their freedom to live, choose marriage partners, work and take their leisure as and where they wished. These rights were whittled away by successive governments voted in by white English and Afrikaans speakers, the most intensive spate of discriminatory legislation having been promulgated since 1948 by Afrikaner Nationalist governments.¹

Although this legislation affected millions of people countrywide, there was among people classified as 'Coloured' in greater Cape Town a particular sense of betrayal, a bitterness that people whom they had lived among, worked with, whose languages they shared, now classed them as 'other', rendered them powerless and then forcibly removed them from places they had formerly shared. Something of this bitterness towards the Afrikaner particularly, but also towards the British, emerges in this extract from one of Rosemary Ridd's interviews (1981:224). Ridd, responding to a statement by the speaker, said:

...this means that the 'Coloured' and the Afrikaner are one people?

Interviewee: Yes, but the Afrikaner is white and we are brown; that's the difference. And the 'Coloured' and Afrikaner will always hate each other: we have been cut off. The Afrikaner hates the 'Coloured' because he knows where he came from. It's the British gave us over to the Afrikaner, a good couple of years ago.

Although in the 19th Century members of the dominant class of English speakers were less liberal and more racist than images of traditional Cape Liberalism suggest - see Bickford-Smith 1988 - now, on the whole, it is not white English speakers but white Afrikaners who are seen as the oppressors. Many of the opponents of the post-1948 segregation laws have been English-speaking, and this division between the language of the law-makers and law-enforcers on the one hand, and the language of conspicuous opposition to the laws on the other, has affected the way the disenfranchised view the two official languages and their speakers, obscuring, for many of the oppressed, awareness that discrimination was practised by the English as well. It is Afrikaans not English that is frequently termed 'the language of the oppressor' and rejected as such.

These attitudes and their history are part of the context of this study but were to have been the main focus of my first research project. The sociolinguistic ramifications of the erosion of civil and political rights would, I thought, make an interesting study, particularly if the perspective of the disenfranchised was investigated. I thought I could pursue this study by means of a large-scale survey based on interviews of people classified as

'Coloured'. Then I realized that this would be inappropriate because, in selecting people to be interviewed, I would be seen to be reifying an artificially created population group, one which has no intrinsic common features to distinguish it from any other population group and which is bitterly resented by many people who have been placed within it (see Venter 1974:118-130, Theron 1976:20.61-63, Lewis 1987:3). Although some scholars (e.g. Edelstein 1974) assume the existence in the 20th century of a coloured group with intrinsic common features, it is clear that the population group 'Coloured' is a residual and very heterogeneous category. Criteria for membership are difficult to establish and enforce: the one real common feature is the set of consequences of being classified 'Coloured' (see Dickie-Clark 1966:158, Theron 1976:21.3-12, Van der Ross 1979:1-67, Ridd 1981:38-58).

But even research projects where the choice of subjects is not planned to reflect official population groups can seldom escape their effects, as I discovered in the next two projects I initiated after abandoning the survey mentioned above.

I turned my attention to a different kind of sociolinguistic research, involving a case study rather than a survey. The project was to investigate what happened to bilingual but non-standard dialect speakers in schools where policies, syllabi and prevailing methods were not sociolinguistically sensitive. I chose to base the work in schools in which I had contacts, which

were parallel-medium (English and Afrikaans), and which had large numbers of pupils who spoke non-standard dialects at home. Both schools that met these requirements fell under the auspices of the then Coloured Affairs Department (now Department of Education and Culture, House of Representatives). Anger and protest at the nature of the segregated and inferior education provided, and at the manner in which it was controlled, came to a head at the time when my research project was to have started, and culminated in an extended boycott of the schools. As a result that project had to be abandoned.

The location of the next project was fortuitous. At the home of a mutual friend I met a member of the committee of a community centre in a bilingual neighbourhood which had a nursery school. During the course of conversation I outlined the difficulties I had experienced in finding an acceptable and practicable way of researching the complicated sociolinguistic situation in Cape Town. I mentioned that I was considering trying to study the way in which pre-school children learned to use both languages before encountering formal instruction in either. When the other guest described what she had noticed at the community centre's nursery school, I asked her to give me an introduction to the staff. She subsequently did so, and the staff gave me permission to do research there.

The focus I chose initially was even more limited in scope than those of the two previous (abandoned) projects. It was to study the progress in acquisition of English and in subsequent code-

switching by a group of children who had recently been admitted to the nursery school from one which had been closed down. Most of these children were Afrikaans-dominant and the community centre's school used mostly English although its pupils came from both Afrikaans and English homes. After two months this project also fell through, a minor victim of the effects of the Group Areas Act: the nursery school served District Six and the children's families were removed to areas set aside for the population group to which they had been assigned. These were too far away for the children to continue to attend that nursery school.

I chronicle these abortive projects to give a sense of some of the political factors that may constrain the design and completion of a research project in South Africa. Others will be discussed in 1.3 in connection with my choice of research methods for field work for my doctoral research.

As the nursery school staff had been very helpful and the school's sociolinguistic situation was so interesting, I decided to undertake another research project there. Still curious about children's development of the ability to deploy both languages appropriately, I planned to study their conversation with their peers and began to make tape-recordings of it. It gradually became apparent through talking to teachers, through reading and through my own observations that, in order to understand the pre-schoolers' linguistic repertoire, I needed to know more about the

linguistic skills and attitudes to language in the speech community from which the children came. The study needed to broaden out. In so doing it took on the dimensions of a doctoral dissertation, and two and a half years after I started doing field work in the nursery school, I embarked on the research documented below, on the use of English and Afrikaans in the speech community living in the area around the community centre.

As it is a central concept in this research, let me now discuss the notion of 'speech community'.

1.2 DEFINITION OF THE SPEECH COMMUNITY

Recognizing the circularity of defining speech communities primarily on linguistic grounds, Muriel Saville-Troike advocates that '... ethnographers of communication should begin with an extra-linguistically defined social entity, and investigate its communicative repertoire in terms of the socially defined community ...' (1982:19). She then goes on to discuss the difficulties of trying to define 'community'. These are legion. In arguing that both District Six as a whole and the focal neighbourhood constitute communities, I shall be working on the lines suggested by Saville-Troike and proceeding from the assumption that, while a community will have visible features, the most productive notion of 'community' is that it is primarily a symbolic construct (see Cohen 1985, Thornton and Ramphela 1988). I shall deal first with the visible features: locality, boundaries, institutions, face-to-face interaction, and then with

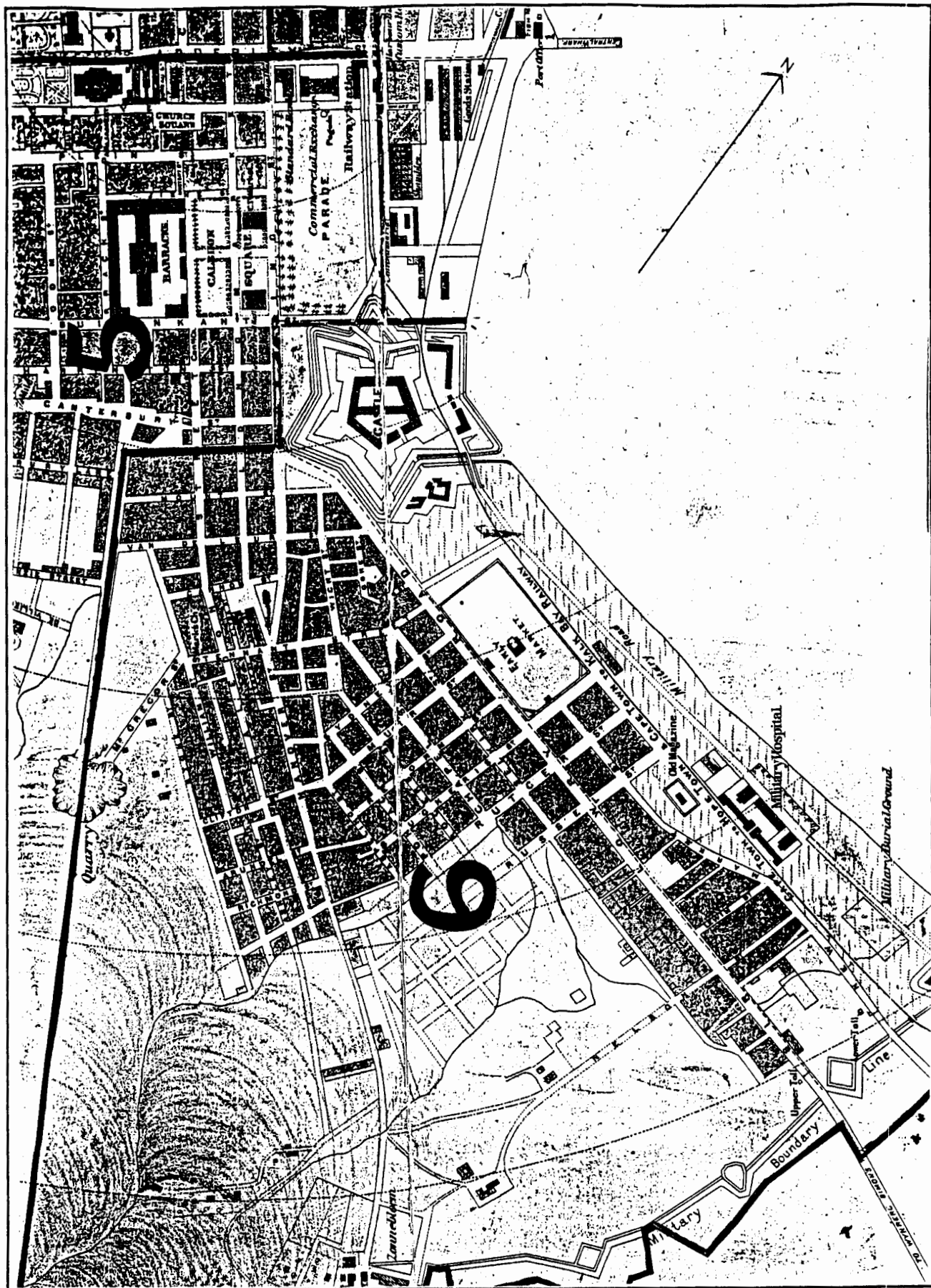


FIG. 2 ORIGINAL BOUNDARIES OF DISTRICT SIX AS IN 1867

the more abstract, symbolic ones: evidence of contained diversity and of images of coherence.

The official boundaries of District Six were first declared in 1867. As Fig. 2 shows these boundaries were the Castle moat, the coastline, roads and notional lines drawn through unoccupied territory and a park. (None of the available maps shows the full eastern boundary.) Since 1867, the official demarcation lines have been slightly changed (as a result of land reclamation, for instance) but as the areas on the other side of the boundaries have always been seen as different entities, alterations to the official boundary lines have not had a significant effect on common perception of the territorial base of District Six.

Though Bickford-Smith (1987) argues convincingly that it is inappropriate to see District Six as wholly distinct from the rest of Cape Town, there is evidence of common perceptions that it was different, unique. Some of these perceptions will be presented in subsequent chapters but, as territory and boundaries are under consideration here, it should be said that the adjacent residential areas, Woodstock and Walmer Estate - see Fig. 3 - are commonly regarded by residents of all three as differing from one another in social composition (see for example Ridd 1981, Rive 1983:1, Nasson 1987:13). The images are of Woodstock as more 'white', more concerned with achieving and maintaining respectability; Walmer Estate as already respectable and occupied by members of a higher social class - it is sometimes jokingly referred to as 'Black Sea Point'; District Six as poorer, more

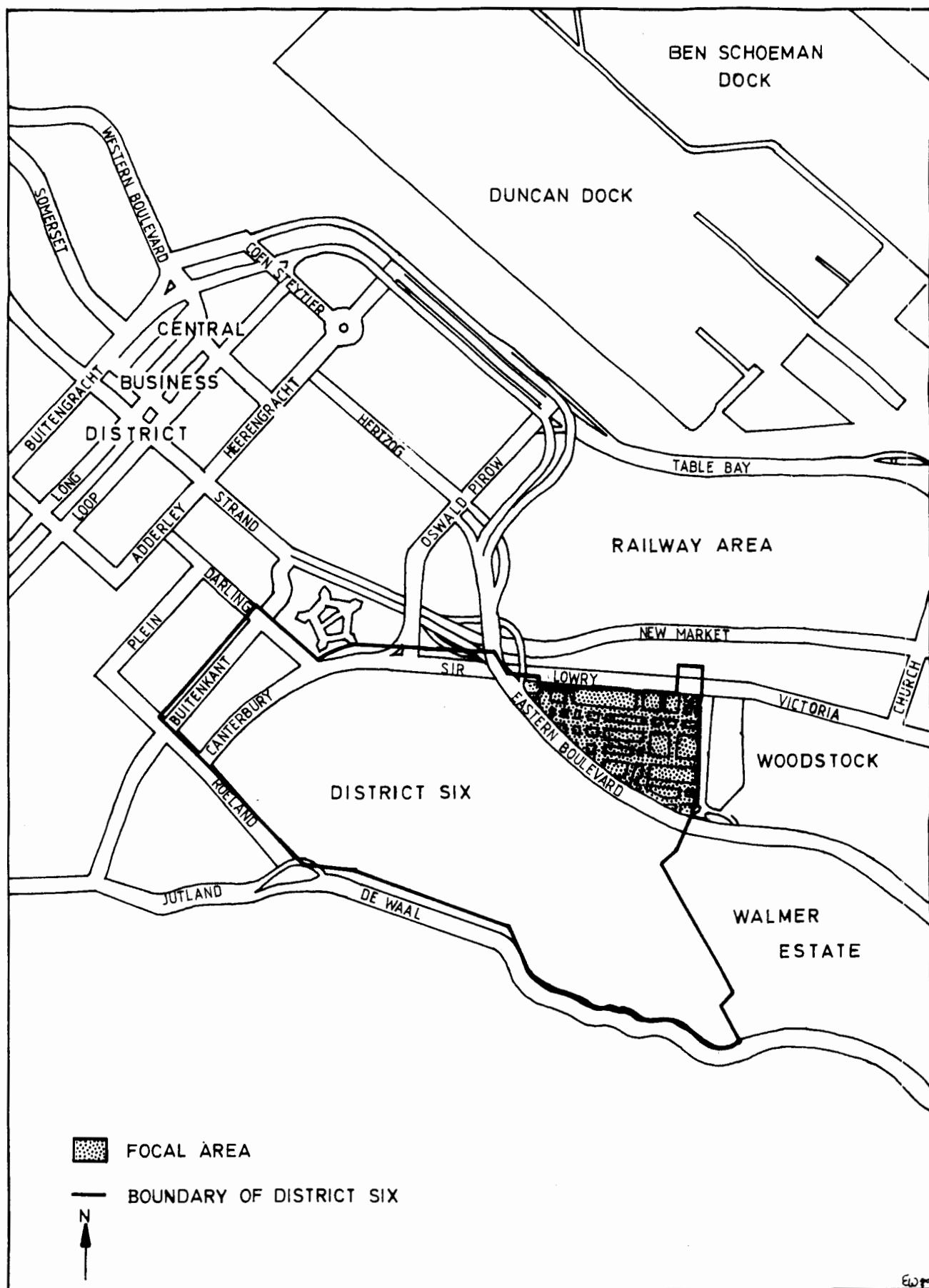


FIG. 3 DISTRICT SIX AND ADJACENT AREAS

cosmopolitan, and meriting the appellation that appears in almost every description of it: 'a vibrant community'.

There were many institutions located in the area and serving primarily its residents. These included mosques, churches, synagogues, schools, community centres, libraries, cinemas, a hospital, a public bath house and wash houses for laundry.

Face-to-face interaction among residents was multiplex in Milroy's sense of the word (1980:21). As street directories show, nineteenth and early twentieth century development of inner-city Cape Town was such that work-places, homes, shopping and service areas were close together so residents tended to work and shop with their neighbours (see Appendix 3). Housing design favoured the use of verandahs, balconies and streets for casual socialising - in no sense were people's homes their castles.

For much of its history, many of the properties in District Six were run down and insanitary, but the place itself - between mountain and sea, with beautiful views - was close to work-places and to the city centre. It was also a place in which families had lived for generations, and over a period of 150 years, a way of living had evolved which accommodated the interests and needs of diverse sub-groups without homogenizing them.

For a group of people to be classed as a community, it is not sufficient that they live in a particular geographical area with access to the same facilities and institutions, they must also

have an image of coherence about themselves as a group (see Thornton and Ramphele 1988:38). This image does not produce uniformity among the group's members or rule out contradictions within individuals. Cohen accounts for this by saying that the symbolic dimension of community

... exists as something for people 'to think with'. The symbols of community are mental constructs: they provide people with the means to make meaning. In so doing they also provide them with the means to express the particular meanings which the community has for them (Cohen 1985:19).

The following extract from Rosemary Ridd's study of District Six, Walmer Estate and Woodstock illustrates this diversity of significance. (The Industrial Area referred to below is the focal area of my research.)

One young woman brought up in a small terraced house in the 'Industrial Area', for example, was keen to emphasize her social respectability and insisted that she lived outside District Six. Others living in the same street, who were less concerned to 'better themselves', preferred to identify themselves with the rough and tumble image of District Six. A young man brought up in Walmer Estate, on the other hand, had no hesitation in identifying himself as belonging to District Six, and delimited the area in its broadest terms. He bemoaned the end of District Six as a place where people of all races mixed freely together, but when he attended social gatherings in exclusive 'Coloured' areas on the Cape Flats, he preferred to describe his home as being Walmer Estate (1981:104).

(My field work did not turn up denials that the focal neighbourhood was part of District Six, but there were a few interviewees who did not like the area and were at pains to explain how they were different from - meaning 'better than' - their neighbours.)

Being part of a community, then, does not mean perceiving no differences from other members. Cohen argues that a community is not 'an integrating mechanism' but rather an 'aggregating device', a 'commonality which is not a 'uniformity', which, he continues,

...does not clone behaviour or ideas. It is a commonality of forms (ways of behaving) whose content (meanings) may vary considerably among its members. The triumph of community is so to contain this variety that its inherent discordance does not subvert the apparent coherence which is expressed by its boundaries (1985:20).

Ridd argues that '...social divisions are an essential part of community relations' (1981:102) and acknowledges their presence in District Six, as does Nasson:

Like any other community, the community of District Six was a complex, honeycomb-like structure. It had many horizontal and vertical walls. Its human building blocks were sometimes drawn together, sometimes pushed apart by the forces of class consciousness, culture and gender division. A significant factor, in consequence, is that this community has not one but many representative voices. Any historical making of District Six will have to penetrate the individuality of social experience across different times and in different places. There is no single history to be told but rather many histories. (1988:13)

In their article on the term 'community' in South African Keywords, Thornton and Ramphela use District Six as an example of a neighbourhood that 'had achieved a high degree of community awareness and cohesiveness'. It had 'developed a dense network of economic and social relationships that sustained its residents'. They go on to say that the 'cruel irony of the

destruction of District Six was that a recognizable community was destroyed in order to accommodate the ideology of 'community' held by government administrators serving their white constituency' (1988:33). (The legal process that led to the destruction of District Six is described in 2.1.)

Through this conflict of interests District Six became a powerful symbol. It is one around which political protest has been continually organized during the twenty-one years since the first legislation which was to disrupt and scatter the community. 'The Friends of District Six' and 'The District Six Residents and Ratepayers Associations' are two of the groups which have organized protest action and, in 1987, a campaign to prevent property development in the vacant tract was launched. Although the area has been officially renamed 'Zonnebloem'², the new campaign is called 'Hands Off District Six'. Clearly a strong sense remains that former residents have rights to that territory, reflecting an attitude that Milroy says is typical of communities (1980:15).

Places and groups of people are, in important senses, constructed through being described. District Six has probably been described more often than any other residential area of Cape Town, partly because it was old, colourful and accessible in terms of location, but also - and this is far more significant from my point of view - because it has been destroyed. The debate about its destruction produced very different kinds of description of the area and its people. Arguments for and the

subsequent defence of the so-called 'slum clearance' highlighted insanitary conditions and crime, while being less vocal about the value and advantages of the site, all of which (bar churches and mosques) was reserved by the legislators for the exclusive use of people in their own race group. Two decades of lament, anger, organized protest and commemoration have depicted other qualities: good relationships among the ethnic groups, tolerance of diversity of religion and life-style, support and personal safety among neighbours, flexible ways of generating and stretching family income, easy access to shops, schools, religious centres, and places of work and leisure. The motivation for and nature of the different descriptions of District Six, produced in the context of its destruction, make it problematic to use these descriptions in a study such as this one, where knowledge of the community is needed in order to understand the features and use of its linguistic repertoire. Nevertheless I shall attempt to provide some insight into the nature of the community, particularly in the next chapter. In this one my concern is more limited: it is to establish that it is justifiable to regard District Six both as a community and a speech community.

In Chapter 2 I concentrate on insiders' perceptions of the community and their effects on language use, but here I shall devote attention to another criterion that is sometimes used to demarcate communities, i.e. the perception of outsiders that a certain group of people constitutes a community and has a common

identity. For various reasons District Six has had such high visibility that people who have had no direct experience of it may still feel they know it. In the paragraphs that follow I shall list the images and some of the channels by which they have reached the general public. (For a more detailed analysis of the images themselves see Ridd 1981:165-173, and for a cautionary note about the inappropriateness of seeing District Six as a place apart from the rest of Cape Town, see Bickford-Smith 1987.)

People whose inside acquaintance with District Six predates the 1950s usually foreground the fact that it was very cosmopolitan, whereas one of the factors regarded by outsiders as having provided a common identity for District Sixers, is that 'they are coloureds', a commonality which is assumed to be based on intrinsic similarities, rather than on what is more likely to hold them together, namely, the shared consequences of having been so defined by powerful 'others'. (Ridd's study constitutes a useful antidote to false assumptions about group identity.)

How did outsiders get to know about District Six? Through visiting it, through encountering its inhabitants in other places, through references to it in newspapers, and through representations of it in various art forms. All of these helped to constitute identity / identities for the area, and, of course, in turn affected those District Sixers who responded to them by rejecting, modifying or living out these descriptions.

In its heyday District Six attracted non-resident shoppers. It was a very popular shopping centre, with numerous small stores providing a wide range of foodstuffs and a good selection of bargains (see Manuel and Hatfield 1967:57-61, and Appendix 3).

There are other aspects of District Six's public identity that are well enough known to give people who have never been there an image of the place, probably a clearer image than they would have of any other Cape Town neighbourhood with which they were not actually familiar. One such aspect is its century-old association with an annual event that is commonly known (and not unproblematically so) as 'The Coon Carnival' (see Stone 1971:2). The carnival face, happy-go-lucky attitudes, humour and spontaneity became associated with its inhabitants as permanent, not just carnival features.

Another common and distorted view focuses on the obverse, seeing little other than the insanitary living conditions, overcrowding, poverty, violence and crime that were undoubtedly facets of the area.

These images have been reported in written accounts of various kinds including court and health department records, letters and articles appearing in newspapers, and academic works (e.g. Venter 1974:57-63, Pinnock 1980a and b, 1984:19-30, Western 1981:142-159, Nasson 1987, 1988). There are also more popular illustrated descriptive works - 'coffee table books' - aimed at a wide, general readership. These are: George Manuel and Denis

Hatfield's book District Six with illustrations by Bruce Franck (1967); the book of photographs by Cloete Breytenbach with text by Brian Barrow: The Spirit of District Six (1970); Oos wes tuis bes Distrik Ses [East west home's best District Six], which contains photographs by Chris Jansen and text by Adam Small (1973); District Six, a book of photographs by Jansje Wissema with an introductory prose poem by Adam Small (1986); and, most recently, William Street District Six (1988) by Hettie Adams and Hermione Suttner, the story of a childhood in District Six.

The best known fictional depictions of life in the area would probably be Richard Rive's sketches, Buckingham Palace District Six (1986), and some of the stories in his collection, Advance, retreat (1983), which had also appeared previously in newspapers, literary magazines and other collections. Two longer works whose characters are from District Six, Rive's (1964) novel Emergency, and Alex La Guma's (1962) story 'A walk in the night' in a volume by that name are not as widely known in South Africa because they were both banned immediately after they were published. La Guma's is still banned. Rive's was unbanned in 1982. 1981 saw the publication of Achmat Dangor's story 'Waiting for Leila' (in a collection with the same name). It is set in District Six after the beginning of the demolition of the area. Poetry about District Six has been written by Adam Small, Dollar Brand, S.V. Petersen, and Achmat Dangor among others. It is known not only to readers of their volumes of poetry, but also to people who have attended meetings and other events at which the poems have been read or performed. Some of Small's poems have been

incorporated into dramatic sketches and plays by the Cape Flats Players.

Since 1980 plays, musicals and films have carried images of District Six in other ways. Melvin Whitebooi's Dit sal die blêrrie dag wees was first performed in 1986, playing to capacity houses in various venues in the Western Cape and also in Johannesburg. District Six, the musical by David Kramer and Taliep Petersen has constantly drawn full houses. It opened on April 11th 1987, and by mid-January 1989, it had been performed 447 times in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Edinburgh to audiences totalling 289,500 people. The figure for Cape Town audiences is 222,370 (figures obtained for me from the Baxter Theatre accounts department, by kind favour of Ms R. Kramer). Commercially produced tapes of the soundtrack have disseminated even more widely the musical's characterization of District Six life.

During the past few years there have been several film festival and other non-commercial circuit showings of two films on District Six, Dear grandfather your right foot is missing, directed by Yunus Ahmed (1984), and Last Supper at Horstley Street, directed by Lindy Wilson (1986). The films have been shown in Cape Town and other major cities in South Africa, and also abroad.

And lastly, there are paintings, drawings (and prints of these) to take images of District Six into the homes of local people and

tourists. Peggy Delport's work is not physically transportable but images from her striking mural will be remembered by people who pass the outer wall of the Holy Cross Church Hall on the corner of Nile and Windsor streets. Other artists who have depicted District Six include: Gregoire Boonzaier, Gerard Sekoto, John Dronsfield, Ruth Prowse, Nita Spilhaus, Albert Adams, Carl Büchner, Sue Williamson, Larry Scully, Tony Grogan, William Papas and Leng Dixon.

So, District Six has an identity for thousands of people who have never set foot inside it, as well as for those who have. That District Six was colourful and lively in a way unmatched by any other area of Cape Town is an impression left both by commentators who saw mainly the social and material ills and by those who preferred to focus on the cheerful face of the community. The relative truth values of such identities would be difficult to establish, but doing that is not part of my project. What is important is that the images (conflicting though they may be), their transmission and their effects have contributed to the construction of 'the District Six community'. Among both outsiders and people who live or lived in District Six there are notions of it as a community, of its residents as having a common identity.

Having noted that District Six as a whole could be regarded, on several criteria, as a community, it should be acceptable to regard as a community that remnant of District Six which is the

locus of my study: it manifests the criteria mentioned above and has suffered extra years of the kind of threat that strengthens group bonds - the threat of dissolution, which was lifted only in 1984. Illustration of some of its kinds of face-to-face interaction will be provided in subsequent chapters. It remains now for me to argue that both District Six as a whole and the focal area constitute a speech community.

Saville-Troike speaks of the informal classification of speech communities in two groups, 'hard-shelled' and 'soft-shelled':

... the hard-shelled community has of course the stronger boundary, allowing minimal interaction between members and those outside, and providing maximum maintenance of language and culture.

Speech communities which primarily use one of the world languages are more likely to be 'soft-shelled', because it will be known as a second language by many others, and interaction across the boundary will be relatively easy in both directions. (1982:20-21)

By these criteria, if the community in question is a speech community at all, it would be a soft-shelled one, because it is not isolated, and also because one of its languages is a world language: English. Whether its language usage is distinctive enough to be regarded as peculiar to District Six is a matter of debate. As 3.1 will show, residents' opinions were divided. Language use within the neighbourhood is not homogeneous, though again there are differences of opinion as to which, if any, sub-groups speak differently. (This too will be taken up in 3.1.)

Although language use is not homogeneous, the codes used are understood by all, and there is considerable agreement about what

constitutes appropriate language for various purposes and occasions. Such agreement constitutes one of the criteria for regarding a group as a speech community (Gumperz 1972b:16). Substantiation for my claim that knowledge and norms are shared will become apparent, as they will be shown both in report and in practice.

As is evident in the extracts from interviews quoted in the next four chapters, there are acknowledged norms for choice of codes in different domains. Section 2.3 gives ample evidence that one of the markers of neighbourly solidarity is the practice of code-mixing and code-switching, that exclusive use of English or of standard Afrikaans marks the speaker as an outsider or, worse, as one who wishes to be distanced from the community in which he or she lives. Given those perceptions, and given also that the speakers share a common locality, it seems justifiable to claim that the speakers form a speech community (see Hymes 1972a:53-55 and Milroy 1980:14-19).

More detail about the uses and features of codes in the linguistic repertoire is provided in later chapters, but let me give here an outline of those codes and their relationship to one another. One could see the repertoire as a spectrum with standard English at one end and standard Afrikaans at the other. Few adults command the full range of those codes. Sharing most of the features of standard Afrikaans syntax, but drawing heavily on English for vocabulary, is the non-standard dialect of

Afrikaans known as *kombuistaal* [kitchen language] or *Kaaps* [Cape]. (In Chapter 7 I give my reasons for regarding it as a mixed code.) Overlapping extensively with standard English, particularly in its lexicon, but differing in several morpho-syntactic rules, is the local dialect of English often described by its speakers as 'broken English'. (This, I shall argue later, is not a stable dialect but a transitional variety, an L2 variety in the process of becoming an L1 variety, and subject to the standardising influence of the schools.) Another feature of the repertoire is code-switching between the local dialects of English and Afrikaans. In the speech community, both code-switching and the mixing that characterises non-standard Afrikaans are subsumed under one term, *kombuistaal*. I prefer not to use that term for two reasons: its use by an outsider can be offensive, and secondly, as a single term, it hides a distinction which I sometimes need to make between the mixed code and the practice of code-switching. I use the term 'vernacular' to cover the non-standard dialects of both languages and the switching between them.

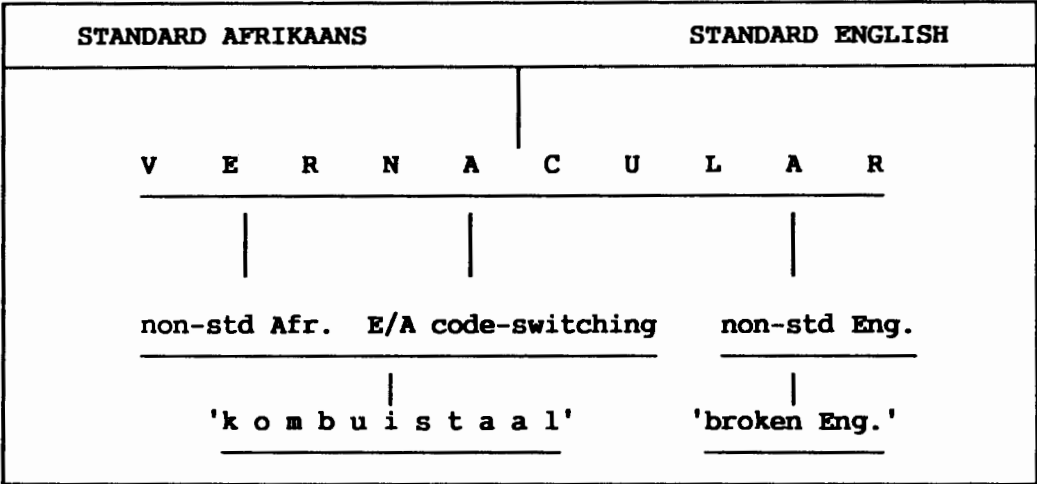


Fig. 4 Schematic representation of the codes in the linguistic repertoire of District Six

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

By the time I embarked on this study, I had already been in contact with members of the speech community for more than two years, and thus had some sense of its sociolinguistic patterns and norms. It seemed important that the first stage of formal research should be to check the impressions I had gained, to try to find out about areas of verbal interaction to which I had thus far had no access, and to ascertain whether language attitudes that I had heard expressed were generally held or not. In other words, I needed to build up a careful picture of the community's linguistic repertoire and the social significance of its codes.

It seemed necessary to do this general descriptive study before embarking on detailed studies of, for example, particular kinds of speech events, the patterning of linguistic variants, the distinctive features of the language used by sub-groups within the community, or the correlation of non-linguistic factors (e.g. age or religion) with expressed linguistic preferences. All of these are aspects of the study of this speech community that I hope other researchers and I will be able to pursue later, if members of the speech community are willing. These more specific, detailed studies (including quantitative analyses) can be better planned and the data better assessed for social meaning, if they can be seen in the light of what emerges from a descriptive study like this one, which is based on some approaches used in the ethnography of communication. It should also be easier to interlock the more narrowly focused studies so

that they throw light on one another and can contribute detail to a composite picture of the speech community. Saville-Troike argues that the three types of ethnography listed by Hymes - general, topic focused, and hypothesis testing - are all important and that 'each type is in many respects dependent on the one before' (1982:114).

I was very fortunate in that Rosemary Ridd's anthropological study of the question of identity, bonds and divisions in District Six and two neighbouring areas was completed in 1981, the year in which I started field work in District Six. I am greatly indebted to this study which is more general than mine and therefore provided me with invaluable contextual reference points. It also explicitly places issues surrounding the use of English and Afrikaans in relation to other dimensions of community life. Moreover, having lived in various parts of District Six, including the particular neighbourhood that is the focus of my research in the period before the large-scale depopulation of the rest of the area, Ridd was able to deal with aspects of its distinctive character as one part of District Six. She also comments in some detail on the Marion Institute which was the starting point for my work in the area.

Ridd's data came from participant observation. I was not able to use this method to the same extent and yet I regard my work as ethnographic in approach (rather than experimental or quantitative). Circumstances constrained the use of the ethnographer's

prime method of investigation, participant observation, so I had to rely very heavily on informants. But, as Milroy points out, the combination of insiders and outsiders as field workers given access to 'a greater stylistic range than either can have, working alone' (1980:41) The study makes no claim to be a full ethnography of communication - it is broad but not complete. It examines the community's linguistic repertoire, their attitudes to it and its deployment in certain domains, with a view to showing how speech community norms and linguistic skills are manifested in practice.

Since the study aimed to be broadly descriptive of perceptions and practices regarding English and Afrikaans, and of linguistic features of discourse, four kinds of data were required. The types of data and the methods of gathering them are described below. To understand the development of the repertoire and the meaning of its codes, historical records of various kinds had to be consulted. Interviews were used to identify patterns in language histories of families, attitudes towards locally used codes, and how people thought the codes were or should be deployed. As some attitudes lie below the level of consciousness (Saville-Troike 1982:111), as others, of which people are conscious, are deemed too unremarkable for comment, and as the self-report of fluent bilinguals about their practice can be inaccurate (Blom and Gumperz 1972:430), observation of verbal interaction was necessary. And finally, to study linguistic features of speech, an extensive corpus of tape-recordings was

essential, and it had to cover as wide a variety as possible of verbal interaction, in terms of domain and participants.

The main challenge was to obtain the data in a way that was both economical and acceptable to members of the community. And not only that: it was, I felt, necessary also to try to foresee possible harm (as well as benefit) that might arise out of the field work. In his article 'Whose privacy, what harm?' Grimshaw (1982) describes some of the unexpected harmful effects on the participants in a number of social science research projects. He acknowledges the difficulty of foreseeing such effects even when researchers have been predisposed to prevent or minimize them. Saville-Troike also stresses the need for sensitivity towards the participants in research, and even advocates not reporting material, the publication of which would be harmful to those it concerned (1982:113). Furthermore she argues that the ethnographer should not just take, but also give in interaction with the community. These ethical considerations influenced the final choice of research methods.

Choices of method made by other researchers studying speech communities were considered for their suitability for my purposes, in terms of the data I needed, the resources I had to draw on, and the political and social constraints peculiar to the context in which I would be working. Unfortunately Lesley Milroy's Observing and analysing natural language (1987) came out after my field work was complete.

I shall take in turn the four data types listed above and briefly describe the process of gathering suitable material in each category.

1.3.1 Historical documentation

Historical records and analyses of historical data dealing with subordinate or marginal groups in society (such as those who lived in District Six) are often less easy to come by than those covering the dominant groups. However, in the latter half of the twentieth century the area came into view nationally and internationally because of the severe consequences of the government's proclamation of District Six as a 'white group area'. This means that there are some records of perceptions of the place on which one can draw.

In the previous section of this chapter I detailed some of the ways in which the life of District Six has been represented and the representations transmitted in popular form. Here I shall be drawing on more academic sources. Three articles on particular aspects of 19th-Century District Six have been published recently (Warren 1985, Bickford-Smith 1987, Nasson 1988) but there are not as yet scholarly histories of the area that are more comprehensive in scope. Academics at the University of the Western Cape and the University of Cape Town have been gathering material on aspects of District Six's history, some of which has been analysed and presented at conferences and workshops (e.g. Nasson: 1987, 1988). Oral

history projects are currently tapping the memories of old people from District Six. The two major projects of this kind at the University of Cape Town are the Cape Town Oral History Project, which is concentrating on inner city areas, and the Oral History Project of the Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research, which is dealing with the history of Jews in the Cape Province.

Aspects of life in District Six are also illuminated by works on particular aspects of the history of Cape Town such as health (Van Heyningen 1981), leisure (Nasson 1987, Keeton 1987), religion (Hodgson 1975, McDonagh 1983) education (Ajam 1986), residential segregation (Saunders 1979, 1980, Western 1981), architecture (Vernacular Architecture Society 1967), crime (Hallett 1980, Bickford-Smith 1981), gangs (Pinnock 1980a and b, 1981, 1984). Old maps and street directories reveal the gradual occupation of the area. Archival records of institutions within it give glimpses of the occupations and interests of people who served in or were served by these institutions.

I turned to street directories for verification of information obtained in interviews about the heterogeneity of people and businesses to be found side by side, and also about the tendency for several generations of (particularly poorer) families to remain in District Six. They did not consistently provide that information about the kind of people I was interested in. Attention is consistently given to 'whites',

1900

OSBORNE STREET.

(From Walls Street.)

LEFT SIDE.

1 Petersen, A.
3 Smuts, C.
5 Dibden, W.
7 Budgen, T.
9 Dean, C.
11 Bam, J.
13 Gomas, L.
15 Swartz, L.
17 Winter, J.
19 Roodt, D.
21 Bowers, J.
23 Dixon, J.
25 Johnson, J.
27 McVicar, H.
29 Fowler, E.

RIGHT SIDE.

2 Langeveld, J.
4 Villet, W.
6 Germishuis, D.
8 Moir, G.
10 Taylor, R.
12-18 Coloured People.
20 Ebrahim, M., General Dealer.
22 Williams, J.
24 Andrews, G.
26 Muller, A.
28 Roode, D.
30 Syms, T.

1910

OSBORNE STREET.

(From Dorset St.)

WARD 7.

LEFT SIDE.

1 Abrahams, A.
3 George, Jos., Cobbler.
5 & 7 Coloured.
9 Lewis, Jno.
11
13 Hall, Jos.
15
17
19
21
23
25 Truter, W.
27 Moses, P.
29 Bartes, Chas.
..... here is Balfour St.
31
33 Coloured.

RIGHT SIDE.

2 Barendse, Hy.
4 Hendricks, Sol.
6 Coloured.
8
10 & 12 Coloured.
14
16
18 Jafta, A.
20 Abajee, Bappa, General Dealer.
22
24 Samboer, W. J.
26 Mackrell, Jno.
28 Gennessen, Hy., Greengrocer.
30 Mackrell, Mrs.
..... here is Balfour St.

OSBORNE ST. (fr. Dorset St.)—Left.

1-29 Indians and Coloured.
..... here is Balfour St.
31-33 Coloured.

RIGHT SIDE.

2-18 Coloured.
20 Hoosen, M., General Dealer.
22-30 Coloured.
..... here is Balfour St.

OSBORNE ST. (fr. Dorset St.).

LEFT SIDE.

1 Morris, J.
3-7 Coloured.
9 Brown, S.
11-13 Coloured.
15 Smart, C.
17 Fortuin, S.
..... here is Balfour St.
31-33 Coloured.

RIGHT SIDE.

19 Donson, D.
21 Coloured.
23 Slinger, D.
25 Coloured.
27 Hearne, A.
29 Barters, H.
..... here is Balfour St.

OSBORNE STREET

(Ward 7).

LEFT SIDE.

—Dorset Street.
1-29 Coloured.
—Caxton Street.
31-33 Coloured.
—Plum Lane.

RIGHT SIDE.

—Dorset Street.
2-30 Coloured.
—Caxton Street.
—Plum Lane.

OSBORNE STREET

(Ward 6.)

—Dorset Lane—Plum Lane

OSBORNE STREET

(Ward 6.)

—Brown Lane.

OSBORNE STREET

Ward 8

Map 11 F4

LEFT SIDE

Plum Lane

Laughton & Co Pty Ltd

Caxton Street

Dorset Street

RIGHT SIDE

Plum Lane

Caxton Street

Dorset Street

OSBORNE STREET

(Ward 8)

LEFT SIDE

PLUM LANE

Laughton & Co. (Pty.) Ltd.

CAXTON STREET

DORSET STREET

RIGHT SIDE

PLUM LANE

L & G Diesel Engineers

CAXTON STREET

DORSET STREET

OSBORNE AVENUE

CENTRAL

1 LEITCH EJ

5 SAMSODIEN A

9 MANNOE J

11 SAMSODIEN A

13 ARENDSE TM

15 MISSBACH M

19 ABRAHAMS E

21 ADAMS C

23 KLAASEN JW

25 DANIELS A

26 BROCK SL

28 CLARK R

2 BARRON G

4 DUNCAN W

6 LAKAY PF

8 DANIELS RJP

10 ADONIS J

12 CLARKE A

14 MANUEL J

16 PETERSEN C

18 APRIL J

24 FISHER RH

26 CUPIDO N

28 BROCK R

30 LINDEBOOM C

FIG. 5 STREET DIRECTORIES' REPRESENTATIONS OF OSBORNE STREET

both property owners and tenants. This is not the case for people who are working class and not white: in various street directories such people are not mentioned by name, but by population group such as 'natives', 'Coloureds', 'Malays'. See Fig. 5 for a typical example of how street directories reflect the marginalization of the powerless: Osborne Street has been uninterruptedly occupied for almost a hundred years but entries for it in Street Directories do not make that clear. The earliest available directories (starting in 1810) list, by surname, all people who were owners or lease-holders of properties, and they indicate the nature of businesses carried on in commercial premises. From the turn of the century one begins to find several entries indicating the race or ethnic group instead of the name of the occupant, only, as far as I can discover, where the occupant is not white (but not in all such cases). By 1941 the marginalization of occupants who were neither white nor owners of businesses was complete, and during the next four decades at a time of high density living, it appeared as if there was nobody living in some streets: witness the records for Osborne Street. By 1987 the compilers had reverted to the original practice of naming all owners and lease-holders but, because of the gaps in these records, it was not possible to use them to check the length of occupancy of homes by particular families, and consequently the length of the period of neighbourly contact between families.

I turned to Census records to gain an idea of the number of speakers of each official language in the Cape Town Magisterial District, which includes District Six. Again the records are organised by so-called population groups. These records are only indirectly useful, firstly because the Cape Town Magisterial District is large and includes several residential areas, and secondly, because the 1921 census includes no information on the languages of people not classed as 'European'. In footnote 3 I have included a summary of information about language among 'coloureds', for what it shows about the drop in Afrikaans as a home language between 1970 and 1980 - the years during which District Six was being depopulated: there is a drop of 13.2%.

1.3.2 Interviews

Interviews were to serve two functions: to elicit samples of natural speech while providing information on language preferences, choices and attitudes. The interviews had to be particularly carefully handled if they were to succeed. For reasons that Milroy has outlined (1980:24-26, 1987:41-57), interviews tend to be of limited value in generating natural speech. And then there was an additional problem relating to this community. Cogent reasons were given by Ridd for her avoidance of interviewing as a method of gathering information in District Six. She points to the fact that 'For many District Six people their only experience of being interviewed has been when Government officials require information from

them' (1981:83). (See also Edelstein 1974:47.) The possible effects of the use of this information on their lives caused considerable anxiety. Ridd indicates the forms that covert resistance to the interview situation may take and expresses her sense of the resulting unreliability of data from interviews on sensitive issues thus: '...interviewing was rather like taking photographs of people posing for the camera, rather than capturing natural shots' (1981:85). Nonetheless it seemed to me worth while to try an open-ended interview method, choosing and training suitable and sensitive interviewers and using a very flexible interview format, one which allowed for the avoidance or abandoning of intrusive questions.

The range of questions in my interviews was narrower than Ridd's and very few seemed to me likely to prove highly sensitive. Those that might have proved so - questions on length of schooling and on employment - were approached carefully and dropped if they seemed unwelcome. The other problems that Ridd identified were connected with the fact that most interviews of District Six residents were conducted by members of the dominant classes and the interviews had served, in both focus and manner, to reinforce the inequality of that relationship. I hoped to avoid those problematic associations by employing as interviewers people who had at one time been part of District Six, as either residents or school pupils.

In deciding on the questions to be asked, I was influenced by researchers' reports of factors that had been significant to members of other speech communities in defining patterns of usage or preference, eg. Blom and Gumperz (1972), Tanner (1972), Denison (1972), Milroy (1980), Scotton (1979), Elias-Olivares (1980), Sebba and Wootton (1984)). Factors included both the well-known general ones such as domain, topic, relationship between interlocutors, and also more specific ones like achievement of a particular stylistic or emotional effect, or more diffuse, subtle factors like ambivalence about one's sense of identity.

Having established a range of factors that had been found to be of heuristic value in other settings, I tried them out for salience here, first by discussing them informally and at length with bilingual friends and colleagues who had had experience of living in bilingual communities. Thereafter they were further tested in a preparatory study, a brief description of which follows. (It has been more fully described in McCormick 1983.)

The preparatory study, which was conducted over a period of 18 months, had two components: interviews with a variety of people, and essays by university students.

The ten people interviewed in the pilot study were told that I was planning a large research project which would examine

language choice and code-switching in Cape Town. They were asked about situations, status factors and allegiances which seemed commonly to affect language choice in their experience. In order to alert them to the kinds of variables that might be significant, they were told of findings in studies of other code-switching communities. Five of the interviews were conducted by a research assistant who was a member of such a speech community and five by me. All interviewees regarded themselves as bilingual in English and Afrikaans though they were not equally fluent in both. Most of them indicated that they often had occasion to use some form of the local vernacular blend of English and Afrikaans. The interviewees are classified as 'Coloured', a factor which is relevant in the formation of attitudes towards the two official languages as I indicated in 1.1. The age range of interviewees was 17 - 35. Five were students, one was an unskilled worker, one a teacher, and three were technicians. The average length of the interview was just over an hour. In three cases two friends were interviewed together.

The essays were set for 65 students at the University of the Western Cape in an attempt to have them integrate a brief introduction to sociolinguistics with their own experience. (I had been asked to give an introductory lecture on sociolinguistics and to run a related workshop for English I students.) The essay topics were:

- (i) My own patterns of language choice.

(ii) Discuss the ways in which people show, through their language, which values or groups they identify with.

I subsequently obtained students' permission to use material from their essays in my research.

The factors identified by the essay writers as being significant in shaping language choice, and in marking actual and desired social identity, were similar to those mentioned in the interviews. There was sufficient overlap in the focal points of essays and interviews to provide a clear indication of factors that would be worth exploring in the interviews for the main study. They were incorporated into the final interview topic sheet, the rest of the topics having been chosen in the light of their usefulness in other studies of code-switching communities. (For a full copy of the final interview sheet, see Appendix 3a.)

Influencing my decision about who should do the interviewing was my hope that the interviews would serve two purposes: provide the information I wanted, and also provide taped speech ranging from formal standard to informal vernacular. Milroy believes that no matter how informal the approach of the interviewer is, the interview situation is 'an uncertain means of gaining access to the vernacular' (1980:26). I agree that it is uncertain and therefore ensured that it would not be the only means of gathering the data needed for a study of vernacular speech features. I assumed that the interview situation itself would ensure that at least for the first few

minutes, speech would be fairly formal, regardless of who was doing the interviewing. To obtain a large sample of informal speech I would need to use interviewers who themselves commanded the same range of English, Afrikaans and ways of mixing as the interviewees had, and who, in terms of personal history and personality, would not be perceived as distant or 'other'. I also explained to the interviewers the advantages of having a friend or family member of the interviewee present during at least some of the interview. As Milroy puts it (1980:25):

The presence of a primary group impels the speaker, to varying degrees (depending partly on its capacity to impose normative consensus), to speak as he normally would in their presence.

She sees such a presence as a matter of luck but beyond the control of the interviewer. I think it can be somewhere in between.

I myself am no longer fully bilingual in English and Afrikaans. I do not speak the local dialect of Afrikaans, and standard Afrikaans (which is the dialect I use albeit no longer fluently) I know to be widely disliked in this speech community. And I am not an experienced code-switcher. These deficits, combined with my contrasting colour and class - I am white and middle-class - made me an unsuitable candidate for eliciting natural speech from strangers. I did, however, want to do some interviewing, particularly initially, so that I could get a sense of the suitability of the topic sheet. I decided to confine myself to the oldest members of the

community, those who knew me by sight from the Marion Institute, where their Darby and Joan Club met. The warden of the Institute asked at a meeting whether any of them would be willing to be interviewed. There were several volunteers and in the weeks that followed, she introduced me to them one by one and I interviewed them, usually at their homes, but in one case at the Marion Institute. Most of them became quite relaxed during the course of the interview, even those who occasionally addressed me as lady, signifying either their categorization of me as a member of the dominant group, or their inability to remember my surname. I used to give my monosyllabic first name, Kay, as well, but prevailing etiquette did not allow them to use it.

My questions about the history of their use of English and Afrikaans seldom really engaged their attention and as a result did not elicit expansive answers. But they did speak at length about 'the old days' and I drew them out on this as they clearly enjoyed it, and so did I. The warden of the Institute had said that they were always glad to find a receptive audience for their stories about times gone by. These animated accounts provided me with extended samples of speech that it is reasonable to suppose is natural: see Labov's recommendations for eliciting natural speech (1972:191).

To cover the rest of the speech community, I found five suitable interviewers. All had either lived in District Six

or been to school there. They were all in their twenties, bilingual and competent code-switchers. Four were women. The first, M, was suggested to me by a mutual friend. She was from a Muslim family though no longer practising the faith herself and had lived in District Six until she married. While her children were young she had done some university courses at a night-school where I had taught her for a short period, so she knew me slightly. She subsequently became a teacher. I explained to her what I was looking for in interviewers and asked her if she could find anyone else who fitted the bill. She brought Z who brought R. Z lived in the neighbouring area of Woodstock. She was a factory-worker and an active member of the local area committee of the United Democratic Front, which had given her experience in door to door canvassing. She was a practising Muslim as was her friend R. When R started to do interviewing he was unemployed but later found work as a clerk in a building society. He had always lived in the focal neighbourhood. The fourth interviewer, B, had lived in District Six in her childhood. Her mother had taught at the Marion Institute nursery school. She had been a student in my sociolinguistics courses and had been very resourceful in gaining the contacts and data she needed for two excellent studies she did involving field-work. She was a Christian and very active in Anglican youth work, and was used to working with people she didn't know. S, the fifth interviewer, had been to school in District Six. She was a student in a TESOL class at U.C.T. for which I ran a

seminar. She was recommended to me by the tutor of that course, as someone who would be a good interviewer. It turned out that she was an experienced one, having been previously employed on a part-time basis as an interviewer for the Cape Town Oral History Project.

In introductory sessions lasting roughly two hours the purpose of the project as a whole was carefully explained to each of the interviewers and a written summary was given to them to keep (see Appendix 1). I took pains to make it clear that linguistically no one dialect of a language is superior to the others, even if one has more social prestige attached to it. I also stressed that all dialects are rule-governed, illustrating this claim by saying that it would be likely that an actor or playwright unfamiliar with a dialect could 'get it wrong'. They agreed. I spoke about the mental agility involved in switching languages, and said that linguists thought there were probably linguistic rules governing when switches could not take place, even if not predicting when switches would occur. That domain, interlocutors and topic often influence language choice was pointed out. I spent some time talking about similar studies that had been done elsewhere, particularly in the U.S.A. among Chicanos and Puerto Ricans (for example, those collected in Amastae and Elias-Olivares 1982). The purpose of this was twofold. It was to give the interviewers a sense that there were other speech communities in the world similar to this one in important ways, communities where people felt ambivalent about

language switching, where it was valued for some kinds of interaction and rejected for others, where stigmatised varieties were markers of group solidarity on the one hand, but, on the other produced negative self-images. I gave a range of examples of switching related to topic and situation, so that they could use them to trigger comparisons both in themselves and in their interviewees. (I had found this strategy very productive in alerting students to sociolinguistic practices in their own environments.) The second purpose of giving this perspective was to make it quite clear that I was not acting as a 'whitey' trying to find language patterns peculiar to 'the coloureds'.

We discussed possibly sensitive topics on the interview sheet which should be handled carefully or abandoned if they seemed intrusive. These were: experience of formal schooling and questions relating to language in the workplace. Middle-aged people sometimes feel embarrassed by their own record of incomplete schooling, particularly if their children are better educated. The topic of employment could have been a delicate matter for people who felt ashamed of being unemployed. National unemployment has increased dramatically over the past three years and is now so common that it is probably not as sensitive an issue as I thought it might be in 1984 when the interviewing started. Employment could also have been a problematic topic in a limited number of cases, for quite a different reason: there are a few families for

whom illicit liquor dealing and traffic in drugs and stolen goods are important sources of income, and are obviously not ones which they would care to mention in a tape-recorded discussion with a stranger.

I have thus allowed gaps to occur in my record of interviewees' circumstances, gaps which will weaken my ability to make certain kinds of generalizations, but that is the price of avoiding intrusive interviewing. On the other hand, being intrusive would have exacted its own price in reducing the level of trust which allowed people to speak relaxedly and to use the vernacular.

As the interviewers differed from one another in both the number and the nature of interviews, let me indicate characteristic features of their work.

M interviewed only one person. The interview, which is discussed at some length in Chapter Six, was with someone she did not know at all, but with whom she established excellent rapport and whom she returned to visit. This interview contains the fullest range of codes that I have from one speaker. (See Appendix 5.)

Z conducted three interviews, in each of which three people responded to questions. She found her interviewees by going from door to door. She engaged people in lively and lengthy discussion, which provided both good anecdotes and useful linguistic data.

R and B did the bulk of the interviewing. R interviewed people he knew very well, both young and old. He produced, for my interest, a vernacular version of the interview topic sheet. It is included as Appendix 2b. He was particularly good at prompting people to reflect on local practices and at making them really think about what lay behind them, often using analogies from other code-switching societies about which I had told the interviewers. It was in one of his interviews that this comment was made:

Om die waarheid te sê, ek dink dis 'n goeie topic wat julle opgehaal het. Ek meen ons mense kan nou realize wat regtig aangaan. Dis die eerste keer, wat julle nou mention, en dis nou wat jy my gerealize het regtig in detail te gaan en uit te vinde wat nou regtig aangaan en so aan. [To tell the truth, I think it's a good topic that you've raised. I mean our people can now realize what's really going on. It's the first time that you mention it now, and it's now that you've made me realize really to go into detail and find out what's really going on.]

It is my hope that other interviewees also gained in this way from our field-work.

B came across as very calm and a sympathetic listener who effectively drew out a range of people initially strangers to her, some who were very confident, rather abrasive, and others who were initially timid and who seemed to have quite low opinions of their own command of language.

S was quite at ease but less discursive in interaction than any of the others. She interviewed adolescents with whom she had made contact through her sister's and her own connections

with one of the nearby secondary schools. She had just completed her teacher training year, and was able to use her professional knowledge to get interviewees to talk about the practices of language teachers and how pupils felt about them.

The interviews were intended to tap a cross section of the population of the focal area in terms of age, sex and religion - there isn't a range of social class positions: it is a working-class community. I also wanted the sample to be large enough to provide evidence of both shared and contradictory patterns and perceptions because communities have bonds and norms but are not homogeneous. I thought that covering 20% of the households would probably be sufficient. As it happened interviews in 15% of the homes gave me the kind of range I required. It was clear that the social ties that exist in the neighbourhood cause people to be aware of - if not always to conform to - prevailing norms with respect to language attitudes and choice of code. I did not think it appropriate to try to map social networks and in that way find a solid basis for relying on a numerically small sample. The reason was that I was not in a position to work out by observation what the networks were, nor was I in a position to build up relationships of trust with enough people to prevent their misinterpreting requests for information about their personal contacts. I feared that they would not understand why network information would be of use in an academic study of language patterns, and would think that I was actually investigating something else. As Watson (1970), O'Toole (1973) and Ridd

(1981) have pointed out, questions from members of the dominant group about personal relationships in this kind of community have often had very damaging consequences. (This is because such questions were often used to discover whether people had the kinds of relationships that fell within the bounds of or contravened various apartheid classifications.)

Interviews were conducted in whichever language the interviewee(s) seemed to prefer and switching was introduced by the interviewers, to be taken up or not as interviewees wished. Informality was encouraged by whatever means felt appropriate to the interviewer. The interviews took place in people's homes. There was often background noise caused by traffic, radios or other people in the house, and this makes for difficulty in phonetic analysis. For my purposes, however, that kind of analysis is important only in cases where it is of use in deciding whether a particular lexical item should be regarded as English or Afrikaans. Only one tape has a section so impaired by background noise as to render it unusable. (The noise was produced by a persistent rooster in good voice.)

Sometimes family members or neighbours were present throughout or came in during the interview and participated by challenging or corroborating what the interviewee was saying. The disadvantage of this was that it was not always possible to ensure that the main person being interviewed responded to

all of the questions himself or herself. This meant that responses couldn't be neatly tabulated and quantified, but the advantages outweighed that disadvantage: more opinions were expressed and the language was kept fairly natural. The interviews produced good material for analysis of vernacular speech.

The interview was not rigidly structured as to sequence of questions or length of time spent on each. People were encouraged to elaborate on topics that interested them. As a result they often moved on to new topics themselves. When that happened the interviewer noted the questions which had been touched on, and, towards the end of the interview, returned to those which had not.

I was lucky in my interviewers and fortunate in how forthcoming interviewees were. Though not all questions were answered by all interviewees for reasons given above, a vivid picture emerges of common characteristics and of variants.

1.3.3 Observation

Given my aims, the ideal way to have studied this speech community would have been from the vantage point of a resident participant observer, accepted by the community but trained to look for and to look at features which might, to its members, be transparent and unremarked. I did not feel that this option was open to me, being sure that, as a middle-class

white South African, I would be regarded as phoney if I tried to move in, from two suburbs away. Had I been a foreigner or a member of a religious order I would have had more latitude in this respect. There are precedents for that: there are currently some white nuns living at Holy Cross Convent, and ten years ago Rosemary Ridd, who was British, lived in the Marion Institute, at Cowley House, and with several District Six families over a period of two years. She acknowledges that her not being South African was an advantage, though it did not remove all problems of acceptance (Ridd 1981:79-84).

The next best option seemed to be to work from the base of being a trusted visiting participant-observer in some domains, and relying on resident informants, interviews and tape-recordings for data on other domains.

My introduction to the Nursery School staff and pupils at the Marion Institute served as the point of entry to other groups and networks that were connected with the Institute. I met parents and relatives of the children at the school's annual nativity plays, and other members of the community at fundraising events such as the Institute's bazaars and variety concerts, in which all of its clubs participated. I had more contact with the Darby and Joan Club than with any of the others except the Ballroom Dancing Club. The Darby and Joan Club meetings were held on Wednesday mornings and this was one of the times when I used to come to work with the pre-schoolers. As I got to know some of the members through

interviewing them, I sometimes took breaks from the children to have tea with the old people. A few of them invited me to visit them in their homes again and introduced me to family members and to neighbours. It was in this way that I met people who agreed to tape family interaction and to tape the Women's Guild meeting analysed in Chapter 6. Tapes of other families and recordings or accounts of other meetings were obtained through contacts made by three of the other five interviewers.

Six months' membership of the Ballroom Dancing Club came about rather indirectly, and, in a sense naturally. A year after the Guild meeting was recorded - see Chapter 6 - the chairperson helped me to fill in gaps in the transcript of the meeting's discussion which had concerned, i.a., the organization of a fund-raising dance. She then invited me to the next dance which was to be held a fortnight later. I attended that and other dances to which I was subsequently invited, enjoyed them very much but felt that my dancing was inadequate. The obvious solution was to join the Marion Institute Ballroom Dancing Club. Several months of bi-weekly classes and an end-of-year party followed. In addition to providing the much needed skills and practice, the classes enabled me to meet other people from the neighbourhood in a relaxed but purposive situation.

I attended other social functions including birthday parties,

bazaars, variety concerts, nursery school nativity plays, and an open day at the Community Arts Project. I also went to the funeral service for one of the old people whom I had interviewed. I attended an AGM of the Marion Institute, one full meeting (and parts of others) of the Darby and Joan Club, and two political meetings in the Community Arts Project Hall. (At these political meetings many of the people present were from other areas as they were for the Cape Town Region of the organization, as opposed to being local area committee meetings.) Another event of interest was a fund-raising event for the Muslim School called an 'Eat and Treat'. I did not attend it but saw the video of it at the school. Further details of these events are given in 4.2.2 and in Chapter 5.

I am still an outsider and have not established any close friendships, but, with some of the women who are roughly my age, and with one family, I have a relaxed, easy relationship. My experience as a participant observer in the gatherings mentioned above gave me a useful, even if rather diffuse set of impressions to contribute to the context in which to set and interpret data gathered in other ways. Relatively little material was obtained by participant-observation only. During the period in which I was doing field work, particularly in the beginning, I went to public events for the purpose of observing, but as relationships developed with individuals and groups, I also attended gatherings and visited people in my private capacity, not for the purpose of data-collecting. I would have felt uncomfortable and rather dishonest about

attending non-public events primarily as an observer. I never asked to be allowed to go to social functions, attending only those to which I had been invited or which were, like the concerts, public.

At the schools my role was different and less potentially ambiguous. I was at the primary schools to interview and to observe, and at the nursery school to observe and make tape-recordings, to facilitate which I did some work as a teacher's aide, and occasionally as a (not very effective) substitute when a teacher was away. Further details of the nature of my research in the schools appear in Chapter 4.

1.3.4 Tape-recordings

Sections 1.3.1 - 1.3.3 have indicated how most of the recordings were obtained. Recordings were all done on small portable tape-recorders (Sanyos and Sonys) which could be operated on batteries or mains. They had built-in, multi-directional microphones. Tapes that were rich in material I needed for the kind of analysis presented in Chapters 6 and 7 were transcribed in full. Notes on content were taken and illustrative excerpts transcribed from the rest. I checked all transcriptions that I had not done myself, and research assistants checked mine.

Details about the making of recordings other than those of interviews are given in the relevant chapters. At this point

let me give an overview of the hours and categories of recordings, and of the range and distribution of speakers in terms of age and sex, and where it is known, religion. (In the table the category 'religion' makes distinctions no finer than Muslim and non-Muslim. This is because where interviewees were Muslim that was clear, either from something said or from their names. Other interviewees did not always mention their own religious affiliation or lack of it even though there was an interview topic dealing with the language of religious services or private prayer.)

There are 52 hours of tape-recorded linguistic data of different kinds, from about 143 speakers who come from approximately 35% of the homes in the neighbourhood. The lack of certainty comes from my not knowing exactly how many children participated in the two sessions of classroom interaction which were recorded, and from not knowing where all of the meeting participants live. 35% is thus a conservative estimate. In addition there are five hours of interviews with former District Six residents and with teachers at one of the schools. These have been used for background information but were not drawn on for analysis of local linguistic features. Nor did I use recordings of pre-school children attending the Marion Institute but coming from homes outside the defined area.

Interviews: 22 hrs

There are 27 interviews by 6 interviewers of 43 interviewees from 34 homes (15.5%).

In 11 interviews interviewees used English only. In the remaining sixteen vernacular Afrikaans is used and in 13 of these at least one person apart from the interviewer code-switched.

SEX	RELIGION		AGE									
	M	F	MUSLIM	NON-M	80+	70-79	60-69	50-59	40-49	30-39	20-29	10-19
8	25		22	21	3	3	4	1	7	8	8	9

Fig. 6 Table representing interviewees by sex, religion and age

Family conversation at home: 1hr 30 min.

Recordings came from three families: one Afrikaans and Muslim, one bilingual and Anglican, one English and non-Muslim. There were 12 males and 8 females. Three speakers on one of the tapes were visitors from the area.

Pre-school children playing in groups of two or three: 25hrs
65 children were recorded, 44 of whom were from the neighbourhood: 26 female and 18 male, from 39 homes (17.7%).

Pre-school children in the classroom: 1hr

Approximately 35 children, some of whom said little or nothing.

Informal talk to primary school children: 1hr

14 children aged 6-9, 7 male and 7 female

Meetings: 2hrs

22 participants aged 19-70, 13 male and 9 female

1.4 OVERVIEW

The background to the research project has now been provided. Both the sociolinguistic and the political contexts are relevant: they affect the linguistic preferences and practices of members of the focal community, as subsequent chapters show. They also place constraints on the viability and appropriateness of some approaches and thus influence the choice of research methods.

This chapter has presented the justification for regarding District Six as a community and a speech community. The next one is concerned with what is known or believed about the nature of those aspects of community life which affect language use, and also with attitudes to the codes of the linguistic repertoire. Both historical and contemporary perspectives are investigated.

CHAPTER 2

THE SPEECH COMMUNITY

The area in which the speech community lives has seen many changes over the past 200 years, some gradual, some sudden and radical, creating continuities and discontinuities which have a bearing on language use. The first part of the chapter looks at the past in order to illuminate the present. It examines the interaction of geographic, economic, social, religious and political factors in the shaping of the broader District Six community and its linguistic repertoire. The second part concerns the focal neighbourhood, and the third part concentrates on attitudes towards this repertoire as expressed in interviews.

2.1 THE BROAD DISTRICT SIX COMMUNITY - AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO LANGUAGE

There is no archaeological evidence to suggest that settled communities lived in that part of the Peninsula which was to form District Six, prior to the seventeenth century (Martin Hall, personal communication). The first map indicating that some streets had been laid out seems to be the one dated c. 1820 (Cape Archives Depot M5/16).

In 1840, when the first Cape Town municipality was established, the area east of Buitenkant Street (which later incorporated District Six) was referred to as 'the 12th District'. Digby Warren (1985), drawing on newspapers and on letters to the municipality, shows that a variety of people settled in that area including traders, merchants, and a large number of freed slaves. He also provides evidence that in the 1840s residents felt that

the area was being neglected in terms of provision of basic amenities. (This was a complaint that was to recur frequently for over a century.) A high proportion of the dwellings were owned by property investors who let them at rents that were difficult for tenants to meet. This part of Cape Town grew faster than the others, reaching a growth rate of 104,5% between 1842 and 1854, location close to sites of production and trade being one of the main attractions (Warren 1985:16).

On the map of 1854 (see Fig. 7) we find a name for a large section of the area, which later became a well-known folk name for District Six as a whole, i.e. 'Kanaladorp'. There are two opinions as to the meaning of this name. One takes account of physical features of the terrain: it was intersected by a number of canals. This is the view of George Manuel (note the spelling he uses):

To get to the area known today as District Six it was necessary to cross several ... canals, which explains the District's old name: 'Kanaldorp' (Manuel and Hatfield 1967:1).

Roger Lass (personal communication) suggests that *gracht* would have been a more likely name for canal at that time. The other interpretation of the name takes cognizance of the social characteristic of sharing among Muslims: *kanala* is a Javanese word meaning please. The entry under *Kanalladorp* in Die Afrikaanse woordeboek is as follows:

Ook soms 'Kanaladorp'. Verouderende benaming b/d Kaapse Maleiers vir die wyk 'Distrik Ses', Kaapstad

PLAN OF CAPE TOWN. CAPE OF GOOD HOPE. 1854.

REFERENCES.

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Public Office. | 31. Civil Engineers' Office. |
| 2. Cathedral. | 32. Arsenal Office. |
| 3. Dutch Reformed Church. | 33. Masonic Lodge. |
| 4. Turkish D ^r . | 34. Theatre. |
| 5. Lutheran D ^r . | 35. Ice House. |
| 6. St. Martin's D ^r (Lutheran). | 36. Shambles. |
| 7. Trinity D ^r . | 37. Orphan House. |
| 8. Roman Catholic Cathedral. | 38. Library. |
| 9. Proposed site of Hall of Science. | 39. Chamber of Commerce. |
| 10. Wesleyan Chapel. | 40. Surgeon's Office. |
| 11. Independent Chapel. | 41. Government House. |
| 12. New Dutch Reformed Church. | 42. Jewish Synagogue. |
| 13. S.A. Missionary Chapel. | 43. Mosley Mosque. |
| 14. Soling St. Chapel (Methodist). | 44. St. John's Church. |
| 15. Police Office. | |
| 16. Commercial Exchange. | |
| 17. South African College. | |
| 18. Nieuw van het Algemeen. | |
| 19. St. George's Free School. | |
| 20. School of Industry. | |
| 21. St. Stephen's Church. | |
| 22. Soldiers' Home. | |
| 23. St. John's Chapel. | |
| 24. Town House. | |
| 25. Club House. | |
| 26. Garden House. | |
| 27. Prison. | |
| 28. Post Office. | |
| 29. Gas Works. | |
| 30. Commissariat Office. | |

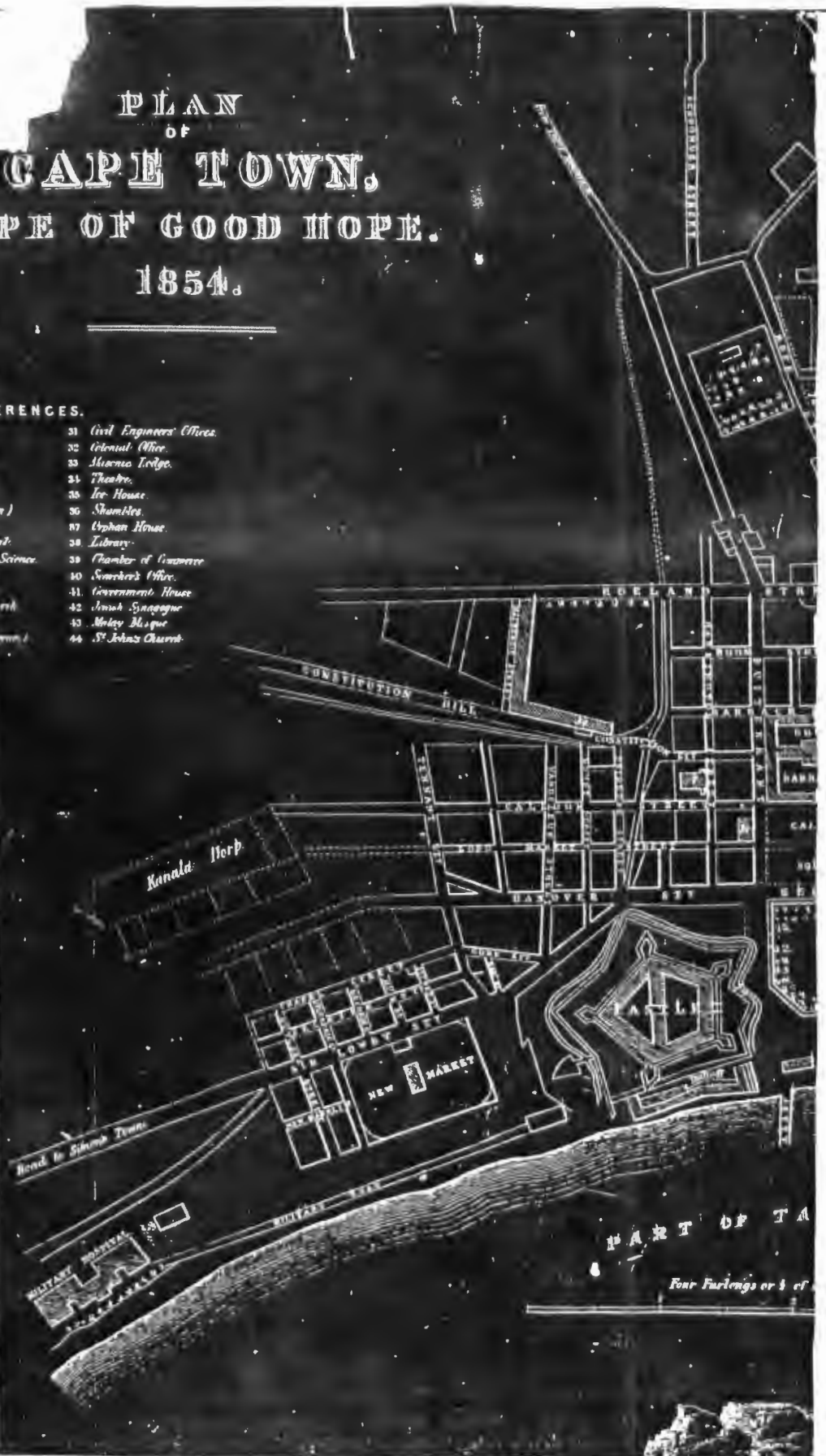


FIG. 7 1854 MAP OF DISTRICT SIX AREA, SHOWING KANALADORP

- so genoem omdat baie v/d woonhuise volgens die stelsel van kanallawerk gebou is. Verkort tot 'Kanaldorp' in ghommaliédjie. [Also sometimes 'Kanaladorp'. The name, which is becoming obsolete, among Cape Malays for the area 'District Six', Cape Town - so named because many of the dwellings were built according to the system of 'kanalla work'. Abbreviated to 'Kanaldorp' in a 'ghommaliédjie.']

(A *ghommaliédjie* is a type of song accompanied by a drum.)

'Kanallawerk', the dictionary explains further, is work done in a spirit of friendship to help neighbours, particularly with the building of a house.

Residents and former residents who are aware of the earlier name for the area take the Javanese meaning as something to value because it refers to the give-and-take that is often mentioned nostalgically as a major defining feature of District Six. I shall return to this feature and its context later.

Cape Town's division into twelve districts was superseded in 1867 by a division into six districts. The sixth district - see Fig. 2 - lay between 'the Castle moat, Canterbury Row, Constitution Street, Devil's Peak, the Military Lines and the Toll Bar' (Vernacular Architecture Society 1967:1). Perusal of street directories - approximately one per decade from 1810 to 1987 - and of the aforementioned survey by the Vernacular Architecture Society, shows that most of the District Six area was built up before 1920. These records also show that housing, places of employment and shops were cheek-by-jowl in many streets. Sanitary arrangements and other forms of servicing of the area

were inadequate, and it took outbreaks of smallpox (1882), the bubonic plague (1901) and influenza (1918) to motivate the municipal authorities to take action to reduce health hazards (Van Heyningen 1981, Bickford-Smith 1981). One of the more drastic actions was the forced removal - carried out by the army - of Africans from the area and their resettlement in segregated townships in 1901 (Van Heyningen 1981). Twentieth century landlords, both individual and corporate (e.g. the Department of Community Development), were also neglectful of their properties and so slum conditions persisted in pockets of District Six (Pinnock 1981), and, in the 1960s, were used as evidence of the need to raze the whole area. In response to the proposed redevelopment of District Six, the Vernacular Architecture Society drew up recommendations for the preservation of some individual buildings and complexes which they judged to be fine examples of particular styles of building. I shall quote from the introductory section of the Society's report: the second sentence indicates how the built environment could facilitate the development of a community, while the first indicates some of the consequences for the built environment when those who live in it are marginal, relatively powerless.

Being a lower-class area, few of the original buildings have any claim to be preserved on their individual merits, though their design is often pleasing and of good proportions. The main value of the original architecture of the District at its best lies in its totality: in its ability to create an intimate environment based on the human scale, and its often skillful use of the sloping terrain (Vernacular Architecture Society 1967:3).

What can be said about the social composition and social relations in District Six? I would remind the reader of the difficulty, outlined in 1.2, of distinguishing myth(s) from reality in descriptions of life in the area. I shall attempt some sketches nonetheless.

To start with bold outlines: some broad generalizations can be made concerning social class, religion, language and ethnicity, while recognizing that the interaction of these factors is complex.

In its early years - the 1840s and 50s - the area housed people of various social classes (Warren 1985). From the 1870s until its destruction a century later, the District's residents were primarily working-class (Bickford-Smith 1987). Street directories which list residents' occupations make this clear.

The major religious groups were Muslims and Christians, except for the period from roughly 1880 - 1940 when there was a large group of Jewish residents. According to Ajam (1986:78) in 1844 56% of occupants of homes in Ward 15 (later to be incorporated into District Six) were Muslim. The area was more cosmopolitan in the latter part of the 19th century than it was in the second half of the 20th: Africans were forcibly removed at the turn of the century and most East Europeans had left voluntarily by the 1940s. These movements affected the linguistic mosaic. In the 19th century the languages most commonly spoken were Cape Dutch, English and, after 1880, Yiddish. African residents spoke Xhosa

and a variety of other languages of the Cape, Mozambique and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). From the 1920s on the main languages were Afrikaans and English. In the 1930s and 40s the number of Afrikaans speakers increased as rural people migrated to District Six from areas around the missions at Genadendal, Mamre, Elim and Darling (Ridd 1981:144). The use of English and Afrikaans as second languages was, of course, affected by the range and nature of social relationships.

To flesh out the outlines of this sketch of the community, I shall deal - in this order - with employment and household economy, education and religion, and finally entertainment, and I shall indicate the effects of these domains on local language patterns.

2.1.1 Employment and household economy

Whatever the origin of the District's early name, 'Kanaladorp', the persistent use of the term for the next hundred years, and the belief about the quality of generosity that the name is said to encapsulate, should be contextualised. Why was there such scope for generosity and need for its exercise? Although the area was not entirely homogeneous in socio-economic terms, there was always a substantial number of poor people living there. The proportion of property owners and of wealthier people during the nineteenth and early twentieth century was small, and the bulk of the population is unlikely to have been in a position to put away money or

provisions against a rainy day. It was quite common for families to need to borrow food or to buy it on short-term credit. Established shop-keepers accommodated the small or seasonal income of their customers, allowing both credit and very small purchases: one candle at a time, a penny's worth of sugar. In 1981 an unnamed speaker on Williamson's tape The last supper puts it thus:

You will hear, 'Alright Pangtjie, vat dit maar betaal my ander week. Pay my penny next week'.
[little Pang, take it but pay me next week].

Householders also traded foodstuffs with one another, as the same speaker goes on to explain:

The girl will come with her basket koeksusters ... then here you tell her 'Okay, sê vir jou ma ek gee jou 'n bords vis vir vier koeksusters'.
[tell your mother I'll give you a plate of fish for four koeksusters - a kind of doughnut]

There was a symbiotic relationship between vendors without the capital to invest in large quantities of stock, and residents who could not afford to buy more than their immediate needs. A picture of this kind of trading as a feature of an earlier period - the late 19th century - is captured by Mr A, son of an Eastern European immigrant:

My father-in-law he came here with his boots on. What could he do? But they were befriended by the people in District Six. They were like one big family: each one helped one another. Somebody must have suggested to him, why don't you take eggs and go from door to door? So he put eggs in a basket and went from door to door and sold them egg by egg. Then he saved himself enough money to have a cart, so he put eggs in the cart ... (Kaplan Centre O.H.P. tape BA transcript p.82).

Income was derived from a great variety of occupations. The two District Six Methodist Churches' 19th century marriage registers and those of St Philip's Anglican Church (which reveal the work of men, but very seldom that of women) show that members of their congregations pursued, among others, the occupations of: shepherd, fisherman, smith, saddler, groom, waggoner, carrier, coachman, cab driver, seaman, hotel waiter, domestic servant, gardener, soldier, mason, carpenter, painter, tanner, shoemaker, tailor, butcher, miller, baker, confectioner, cooper, tallow chandler, soapmaker, and, most common of all, labourer.

Street directories for both the nineteenth century and the twentieth show that the premises for many of these occupations were in District Six, as were those of, i.a., jewellers, barbers, snuff manufacturers, launderers, drapers, grocers, fishmongers, and a mandolin maker! Then and subsequently prostitution was another means of making a living (Hallett 1980:135-136). For an indication of the range of employment (legal, semi-legal and illegal) in the informal sector in District Six in the 1930s and 40s see Pinnock 1980b:11, and in the 1950s: Pinnock 1984:22. Whittingdale's (1973) study concerns the formal sector: it deals with the location of industry in Cape Town and provides two maps of District Six (Plates V and IX) locating precisely the many sites on which industries of sixteen different kinds were to be found in 1920 and in 1972. The garment industry was the biggest source

of employment in 20th Century District Six.

It was common for families to supplement their income by making goods or providing services, part-time, from home. Children were often unable to complete their schooling because they were required to become full wage-earners or to provide essential help in the family's income-providing work by, for example, collecting and delivering dress-making or tailoring orders, laundry or home-made foodstuffs. There are numerous references to this in the oral history records of both the Kaplan Centre and the Cape Town Oral History project. (See also Pinnock 1980b:10 and Feldman 1984:30.)

Residents whose income depended primarily on the custom of the neighbourhood could manage with less fluency in English, but would probably have needed to use it at times as a lingua franca in a very cosmopolitan neighbourhood. Street directories (before they became selective about who they listed) show that people of different linguistic or ethnic backgrounds lived side by side, but also that there were higher concentrations of particular groups in some places. This is borne out by oral history and occasional written references. Large numbers of Yiddish-speaking Jews lived in Hanover Street, Constitution Street, De Villiers Street, Harrington Street, Maynard Street. One interviewee described District Six as 'a small Jerusalem' (Kaplan Centre tape EK transcript p.23). Another interviewee recalls that there were concentrations of Xhosa speakers in Horstley Street, Zulus in

Boom Street and that, later, a group of Swazis moved into the area and lived scattered among other people '*Nie soos nou nie*', he concluded, '*Verwoerd het alles gesort.*' [Not like now, Verwoerd sorted everything] (Phillips 1987:32). That English was widely spoken in pockets of District Six by the 1860s is attested by the report of a visiting Frenchman in 1861. I quote from Manuel and Hatfield (1967:2):

A Frenchman writing in *The Monthly Magazine* of that year, describes the suburb and observes:

Eastward up Caledon Street and its parallels towards Zonnebloem, you pass through an entire settlement in which the brogue of the Emerald Isle, the Doric of the North Briton and the 'language of Cockaigne' have utterly supplanted and rooted out the patois Dutch.

The location of the neighbourhood close to the central business district and to the docks (until 1945 when they were moved as a result of land reclamation) meant that residents whose home language was not English were exposed to it if they worked or shopped in the CBD. English was needed as a *lingua franca* in contacts with sailors and passengers from ships who visited the area in search of accommodation, goods, entertainment or 'local colour'.

2.1.2 Education and religion

Prior to the mass removals following the 1966 government decree, there were twenty schools and two teacher training colleges in District Six. Fourteen of the schools and both

training colleges taught exclusively through the medium of English⁴ until Government Regulations concerning mother tongue instruction (which had been on the statute books since 1921) began to be enforced after the Botha Commission Report was tabled in 1956. The effect was to force some schools to change to Afrikaans medium or to run parallel classes through the medium of Afrikaans. By the time of the removals there was only one school which taught exclusively through English.

Twelve of the schools were started by religious groups: nine by Christians and three by Muslims. German missionaries taught through the medium of Dutch and then Afrikaans in their two schools. Six of the seven schools set up by English missionaries were originally English medium, the Methodist school of industry was Afrikaans. Classes in the Muslim schools were taught in English. Where I know of changes of language medium resulting from the enforcement of the 'mother tongue' regulations, I have added them to the following list of schools and their languages which was kindly drawn up for me by former District Six residents, Rev. and Ms Kadalie. Additional information was obtained from Dr Mohammed Ajam and Mr Achmat Davids.

(NOTES: Unless otherwise stated, these are primary schools. I use the term 'dual medium' rather than the more accurate 'parallel medium' because the former has more common currency in the Western Cape. Strictly speaking 'dual medium education' refers to a system where pupils study some subjects

in one language and some in another - this is the situation that prevails in many Department of Education and Training schools for blacks.)

SCHOOL	LANGUAGE MEDIUM
Lutheran Primary School	Dutch then Afr
Zinzendorf Moravian School	Dutch then Afr
Holy Cross R.C. Primary School	Eng. then Dual
St Philip's E.C. School	Eng. then Dual
Lydia E.C. School	Eng.
St Mark's E.C. School	Eng. then Dual
Bethal A.M.E. School	Dual
Rahmaniyeh Institute	Eng. then Afr. now reverting to Eng.
Sheik Yusuf Moslem School	Eng. then Dual
Muir Street Moslem School	Eng. then Dual
George Golding Primary School	Dual
Ashley Preparatory School	Dual
Chapel St Primary School	Eng. then Dual
Sydney Street Primary School	Eng.
Zonnebloem Primary School	Eng.
Roeland Street School of Industry	Eng. then Afr.
Albertus St Methodist School of Industry	Afr.
Trafalgar Junior School	Eng. then Dual
Trafalgar High School	Eng. then Dual
Harold Cressy High School	Eng.
Zonnebloem Training College	Eng.
Hewat Training College	Eng. then Dual

Fig. 8 Table of schools and colleges, and the language(s) used as medium of instruction.

The overall predominance of English as a medium of instruction until the middle of this century meant that most District Six residents whose schooling was complete prior to that time would have been to an English medium primary school, and all who had attended local high schools would have had that part of their schooling in English.

The pattern of schooling together with the effects of proximity to the central business district and the harbour meant that this community, while often speaking another language at home, had extensive and intensive exposure to English over a period of at least a century. For a predominantly working class community this is unusual: most such communities in Cape Town have been and still are Afrikaans- or Xhosa-speaking, with schooling in the medium of those languages at least to the end of primary school. (Secondary schooling sometimes necessitates, sometimes allows a change of language medium.)

It should not be assumed that literacy is entirely tied to formal schooling, nor that the ability to read a language entails an ability to write it. In trying to discover, even approximately, what the level of literacy was among adults in District Six at about the turn of the century, I came across interesting patterns connected with religion. For practising Muslims and Jews, the ability to read the language of the sacred texts was very important and was valued at least as much as, if not more highly than, the ability to read a local language. It is not as easy to discover how well Christians were able to read the Bible or prayer books as there aren't the same kinds of records of special classes to teach the reading of sacred texts. Ability to read the Bible was not a pre-requisite for confirmation, for instance, although it would have been available to Christians in their home language.

Marriage records provide some evidence of the extent of basic literacy among the congregants of various religious institutions. Those of the Roeland Street synagogue for 1903-1906 show that a small minority of men and women were able to sign their names in Yiddish only, and it was an even smaller proportion who could not sign at all (Feldman 1984:62-63). The marriage registers of the two Methodist churches in the area, and of St Philip's Anglican church, covering the last half of the 19th Century and the first decade of the twentieth, suggest that their congregants were less literate: they contain marks not signatures for the majority of the men and women married during that time.

In his study of Muslim education in Cape Town, Ajam (1986) describes the dilemma faced by Muslims who wanted their children to learn arithmetic and literacy in English and Dutch. They did not have the resources, either financial or in terms of trained people, to set up their own full-scale schools, though they had provided educational centres since 1793, concerned mainly with the transmission of Islamic religion and culture. Most of this teaching was given by Islamic scholars in what Ajam calls 'house-schools' (1986:101). They taught the reading and writing of Arabic, but taught through the medium of the local Cape Dutch dialect. The only basic general education available was provided by Christians, and it seems that, at enrolment, preference was given to Christian children and, where Muslims were accepted,

there was often an attempt to convert them during the course of their schooling. Some Muslim parents took their children out of school rather than subject them to the risk of having their faith undermined. (See 4.1.1 for a more detailed account of the background to this fear.) It was not until 1912 that a state subsidy was won for the establishment of a Muslim primary school. Ironically, although most Muslims had Afrikaans as their home language, that school, like most of the Christian mission schools, had English as its medium of instruction. According to Ajam, the reason for this was that Dr Abdurahman, the prime mover for the school,

was showing more than a preference for the language of international trade and science: he was making a political statement that the school's products must be prepared for the language spoken by the dominant class of the city (Ajam 1986:219).

He had seen in his own life that, with a fluent command of English and a knowledge of English culture, it was possible to reach high places in economic, professional and public life.⁵

The Eastern European Jews who immigrated in large numbers between the 1880s and 1920s had similar reservations to those of the Muslims concerning the schooling available to their children, only some of whom were able to be accommodated at the nearby Hope-Mill Street Hebrew Public School which existed from 1896 to 1905. For the rest, the choice was confined to Christian Schools. These immigrants usually spoke Yiddish at home and when they arrived were not literate in English or Dutch. The men and boys, at least, were sufficiently literate

in Hebrew to be able to read prayers and extracts from the sacred texts. According to Bradlow (1970:3) the Lithuanians were, as a group, the most highly educated of the Jewish immigrants. District Six was where most of them settled initially. The English and German Jews, who tended to be better off materially and lived in areas less crowded than District Six, spoke and were literate in English and Dutch / Afrikaans. They seem not to have approved of the conservatism of the East European Jews, and some of their prominent figures are on record as having tried to anglicize them and to convince them that secular education for their children was essential and not necessarily corrupting, even if offered within a Christian ideology (Feldman 1984:9). Their argument convinced some parents but not others. Oral history accounts of Jewish immigrant children's experience at local schools vary in the degree of alienation they express. Many Jewish scholars seem to have done well, even if they had started school unable to speak anything but Yiddish. They learned English quite quickly by making a concerted effort to do so both in and out of school.

Although in District Six the immigrant Jews would have heard at least as much Dutch / Afrikaans as English from other residents, it was English that they made an effort to acquire, rather than Dutch or Afrikaans. Mr B, in accounting for this choice, focuses on the dominant position of English:

Apart from the fact that Afrikaans was only the language of the farmers and the poor white,

English was dominant to the immigrants. They went to English speaking countries. To them in Lithuania, in Poland, Africa was an English country. They didn't know when they came here - they didn't know that there was another - they used to call it Boeris. (...) Naturally they integrated and sent the children to English schools. And the children and they themselves started speaking English, their adopted language. The dominant language here was English (Kaplan Centre tape BB transcript p.63).

This picture of natural and fairly smooth integration is challenged by other accounts. The retention of Yiddish must have been quite noticeable because, in the South African Jewish Chronicle of June 3rd 1903, we find

...anything which cultivates the art or practice of Yiddish speaking in a European colony is actively detrimental to the Jewish people and their cause.

Feldman, in whose study of immigrant Jews this quotation appears (1984:41), reports that the Anglo-Jews offered English classes for newcomers. They could be attended by adults. Some of them were so successful that the immigrants were able later to organize further classes for themselves. (The zeal with which the anglicization of the East European Jews was pursued by the Anglo-Jews is easily understandable in the context of the prevailing prejudice among the English colonials against various non-English-speaking immigrant or migrant groups. This prejudice associated these groups with dirt and disease, and blamed them for the spread of the bubonic plague of 1901 and other epidemics - see Van Heyningen 1981.)

As Jewish adults and adolescents were not encouraged to form

close ties with non-Jews, it was not easy for those who had had no schooling in South Africa to learn English and Dutch / Afrikaans informally. There are oral history records of immigrant families whose adults spoke Yiddish to the children and to one another, while the children spoke English to one another and sometimes also to their parents, if the parents could understand it. Children were often essential as interpreters between their parents, the community and local institutions. For children who did not attend Cape Town's Hebrew Public School there were cheders, afternoon classes where Hebrew and aspects of Jewish culture were taught.

The number of mosques, churches and synagogues suggests that religion was a prominent aspect of District Six life. With the help of former residents and some written records, I have been able to establish that there were three major synagogues and two smaller ones, three mosques and twenty-one churches, perhaps not all in operation at once. The fifteen Christian denominations represented in District Six were: Lutheran, Moravian, Roman Catholic, Church of the Province of South Africa, Church of England in South Africa, New Apostolic, Baptist, Shiloh Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal, Methodist, City Mission, Congregational, Dutch Reformed Mission, Salvation Army, Volkskerk van Afrika.

I could not track down the information I wanted about all of them as most of the buildings have been destroyed, congregations dispersed and records moved - sometimes to the

exercise book dated 1845 in which the handwritten text is Cape Dutch / Afrikaans in Arabic script. He says that for the first few decades of this century it was quite common for notes, shopping lists etc., of Muslim families to be in Afrikaans written in Arabic script. It is clear from historical records - see Raidt 1980: 151, Kotzé 1983: 29-30 - that the association between Cape Dutch or Afrikaans and the Muslim community is one of long standing. In 1908 Hubertus Elffers published The Englishman's guide to the speedy and easy acquirement of Cape Dutch - for the use of travellers, settlers and military men in which he says that the best 'representatives' of Cape Dutch in the Peninsula were to be found among the Muslims (1908:6)).

Almost all of the congregants of the Buitenkant and Constitution Street Synagogues were Eastern European Jews whose home language was Yiddish. The Buitenkant Street shul was Hasidic and it would appear that the people who attended it clung to Yiddish. The son of the rabbi there at the turn of the century said, when interviewed, that his father had had a good reading knowledge of English, and knew the rules of English grammar well enough to help his children with homework, but had never learned to speak it fluently as he had little opportunity to do so in his work with his very poor congregation (Kaplan Centre tape AM transcript p.25). The Roeland Street Synagogue's congregants tended to be somewhat better off, were less conservative and became anglicized sooner. Jews whose home language was English mostly did not

headquarters of the religious organization but sometimes to whichever centre the incumbent moved when the institution closed. Where I was able to make contact with these people they were very helpful and prompt in replying to my letter requesting information about language(s) used in various aspects of work connected with the place of worship. The languages used in the religious centres are given in Fig. 12.

Achmat Davids, a scholar researching the history of Islam in Cape Town, was the source of most of the following information about the mosques in District Six (personal communication). Details of the foundation of the Zainatul Mosque came from Shaykh Nizam Mohammed of the Muslim Judicial Council (personal communication). The oldest mosque in District Six is the Al Azhar Mosque in Aspeling Street, which was founded in 1887. Five years later the Galilul Rahman Mosque in Ellesmere Street was built. The language of the people who attend these two mosques is Afrikaans. The Zainatul Mosque in Muir Street was built in 1938 by Indian immigrants whose home languages were, mainly, Gujarati and Urdu. Until the nineteen-forties sermons were given in Urdu. Now, however, the younger people are predominantly English-speaking.

Interestingly, it was Islamic teachers who produced some of the earliest texts in Afrikaans. They were commentaries on the teachings of the Quran for children, written in Afrikaans in Arabic script. Davids has recently uncovered a school

DATES FOUNDATION CLOSURE		NAME OF INSTITUTION	LANGUAGES Services Pastoral Records Work		
1822	1837 (washed away)	Roman Catholic Church Harrington St	Latin (sermons in Eng.)	Eng. & Dutch	Dutch
1836		Sydney St Methodist Chapel			Dutch
1846	1966 (moved)	Holy Trinity Anglican	Eng.	Eng.	Eng.
1875	+	Metropolitan Methodist Church, Buitenkant St			Dutch till approx. 1900 then Eng.
1884	+	St Philip's Anglican Church Chapel St	Eng.	Eng. & Afr.	Eng.
1886	1980	Moravian Church Ashley St	Afr.	Afr.	German Dutch, later Afr.
1887	+(infreq)	St Mark's Anglican Church Clifton St	Eng.	Eng.	Eng.
1887	+	Al Azhar Mosque Aspeling St	Arabic	Afr.	Arabic & Eng.
1890	1971	Shiloh Baptist Church Arundel St	Eng.	Eng.	Eng.
1892	+	Galilul Rahman Mosque Ellesmere St	Arabic	Afr.	Arabic & Eng.
1897	+1905	Hadbad Synagogue Buitenkant St	Hebrew, (sermons in Yidd.)	Yiddish & later Eng.	
		Lutheran Church Searle St	Afr.	Afr.	Afr. (& German infreq)
1900	1959 (moved)	Tifereth Israel Synagogue Roeland St	Hebrew (sermons in Eng.)		Eng.
1901	1939 (moved)	Beth Hamedrash Harhodosh Synagogue Constitution St	Hebrew (sermons in Yiddish)	Yiddish & Eng.	Yiddish (until 1940) then Eng.

DATES FOUNDATION CLOSURE		NAME OF INSTITUTION	LANGUAGES Services Pastoral Records Work		
1903	<u>±</u> 1980	Salvation Army Muir St	Eng.& Afr.	Eng.& Afr.	Eng.
1904	1978	Sheppard St Baptist Church	Eng.	Eng.	Eng.
1916	+	Holy Cross Catholic Church, Nile St	Latin till 1964 then Eng.	Eng.	Eng. & Afr.
1922		Volkskerk van Afrika Grey St	Afr.& Eng.	Afr.	Afr.
1925	1973	Cape Town City Mission, Aspeling St	Eng., later Afr.& Eng.	Eng.	Afr.& Eng.
1927	1969	Cape Town City Mission, Cross St	Eng., later Afr.& Eng.	Eng.	Afr.& Eng.
1931	+	New Apostolic Church, Virginia St	Afr.& Eng. '50/50'	Eng.	Afr.& Eng.
1934	1973	Cape Town City Mission, Smart St	Afr.& Eng.	Eng.	Afr.& Eng.
1935	1972	Cape Town City Mission, Constitution St	Alter- nately E & A	Eng.	Afr.& Eng.
1938	+	Zainatul Islam Mosque Muir St	Arabic (sermons in Urdu until 1940s & Eng.)	Urdu & Eng.	Arabic & Eng.
1902	1940 transferred to	Synagogue Van der Leur St	Hebrew		
1940	+	Synagogue Maynard St	Hebrew		
	<u>±</u> 1975	A.M.E. Bethel Church Blythe St	Eng.		
	<u>±</u> 1975	Ebenezer Church N.G., Aspeling St	Afr.		

Fig. 9 Table of places of worship and the language(s) used for services, pastoral work and records.

live in District Six and they attended shuls in their own neighbourhoods.

Fig. 9 summarises information obtained about language use in the religious centres. NOTE: A '+' under 'date of Closure' means that it has not closed.)

What this table shows is that the language of the services was, in many instances, not the home language of the congregants. This is true not only where the language of the services was Hebrew, Arabic or Latin, but also in some cases where it was English. Pastoral work was more likely to be in the home language of the congregants. However, of the churches from which I received replies to my request for information, the New Apostolic Church was the only one which reported that it had been church policy to appoint only bilingual ministers. Interestingly, records kept by the Christian denominations were mostly in English regardless of the language of services and pastoral work.

2.1.3 Entertainment

In District Six both informal and formal entertainment were generously provided. There were some public areas which were used either primarily or in a secondary way as sociable gathering places where language skills were important in holding audiences, for example The Seven Steps, The Stones (an outdoor venue for political meetings), and the public bath

house where cleanliness and hours of entertainment were to be had cheaply:

Everybody run, from the smallest kid to the eldest goes to the baths to have a bath there Sunday mornings. If you leave your house, say eight o'clock, you come back two o'clock. You pay about two cents, three cents, you get some soap, you get a towel. Sometimes also when you enter those rooms there everybody was making a big noise singing Afrikaans liedjies, English songs, and you hear the best of jokes in there (Williamson 1981).

In the twentieth century the cinemas were very popular (Pinnock 1980b:11). The films they screened were in English, which seems to have met with the approval of the audiences as, in their selection of both feature films and serials, the managements were sensitive to the responses of their audiences. (The most effective advertising was done by word of mouth among the many social networks, eye-catching advertising gimmicks notwithstanding - see Nasson 1987:3-17.)

Live performances were also catered for in various ways. There was a Yiddish theatre. Kaplan Centre interviewees disagreed about the extent to which it was supported by the local Jewish community. For many years around the middle of this century, Mr Veldsman, the principal of one of the local schools, St Philip's, put on a Shakespeare play every year, often in the City Hall, using amateur actors from drama groups in District Six and neighbouring areas (John Ramsdale, personal communication). The Eoan Group, best known for the teaching and performance of ballet and opera, grew out of

instruction offered in these arts and those of public speaking and acting. Classes were first held in a small room in District Six in the 1920s (Venter 1974:350). The fame of the group, which staged classical ballets, and Italian, French and German operas, spread beyond the confines of Cape Town when the Company went on national tours. Nasson describes the importance of music: it was not, he says, 'a minority leisure experience '. People made music - choral and instrumental - as well as going to listen to it (1987:25-30). In the records of the Cape Town Oral History project there are frequent references by working-class people to Saturday afternoon outings to the opera. Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand), in a video entitled A Brother with perfect timing, speaks of the way the music created in District Six reflects the variety of the area's cultures. He demonstrates its blend of musical styles showing for example, how hymn tunes are transformed taking on the colouring and rhythms of popular secular music.

The entertainment event of the year was the New Year Carnival. Songs were a central feature. They were sung during the procession and there were also song competitions in the stadium at which the procession terminated. These songs were in Afrikaans and in English and some used the vernacular mixture. Lyrics were often composed locally though some of the tunes were taken from internationally popular songs (Gerald Stone: personal communication).

2.1.4 Community Relationships

Thus far I have given some idea of the different linguistic and ethnic groups in the area, their work opportunities, education, religions, entertainment. But what do we know about relationships across religious, linguistic and ethnic boundaries? Again, this is difficult to establish. Popular response to the destruction of the community in the name of apartheid has been to claim that in District Six everyone got on with everyone else, that District Six was a living rebuttal of the argument that only apartheid can provide the necessary environment for different ethnic or race groups to grow in their own way and to co-exist harmoniously. This popular response has provided few images of intergroup conflict. It seems now to fall to academics to point out that some conflict did occur. My description below of intergroup relationships contains reports of both harmonious and conflictual relationships.

Broadly speaking these relationships seem to have been far more positive than they were in greater Cape Town from about 1870 on: Van Heyningen (1981) and Bickford-Smith (1988) adduce a great deal of evidence of the deep prejudice that developed during the latter part of the nineteenth century among the English-speaking middle class of greater Cape Town towards Africans, Muslims, East European Jews, Portuguese - in fact towards anyone who was 'Other', not of British extraction.

This evidence dents the image of 'traditional Cape Liberalism' and makes it surprising that the image of the English language escaped the kind of tainting from the behaviour of its white middle-class speakers which Afrikaans has suffered since 1948. Perhaps the reason is that the ethno-centrism / racism displayed by the English is no longer as much in the public eye or memory as that of white Afrikaners.

While the ruling classes - English and Afrikaans - were bent on separateness, the residents of District Six were less exclusive. I have not come across evidence that a common home language was a determining factor in the development of friendships (as it is and has been in other parts of the country). Religion, however, clearly played a role in the formation of intimate friendships and general social networks, but there is disagreement about the extent to which religious differences affected social relationships and good-neighbourliness. On the one hand, there are those who, while not minimising religious differences, say that people of various faiths got on well together, being aware of common human needs but acknowledging and respecting differences (Phillips 1980:10-11). People holding this view often argue that the ability to live together was the most valuable feature of District Six life. I cite the following excerpts from oral history records as examples of the kinds of incidents that were often adduced as evidence of the good

relations between different religious groups. The first illustrates the recognition of common needs, and the second the expectation that people would accommodate one another's customs.

Mr E, a Jew whose family immigrated from Eastern Europe when he was a child, talking of the birth of his sister, said

My youngest sister was born in District Six and that was times when there were no maternity homes and the Malay women that lived around there helped mommy to give birth to the child. (Kaplan Centre tape HE transcript p.2).

(Note: 'Malay' is often used as a synonym for 'Muslim'.)

One of the people interviewed by Williamson (1981) reported the following incident as typical accommodating behaviour:

Next to the mosque was the Salvation Army and they were singing with their brass band there, and when the muezzin calls out, he told them, stop, he's calling the people to God. Now I mean, where do you get that? Where's this tolerance, hey?

Accounts of the mixing between ethnic and religious groups which occurred in District Six came not only from people like those quoted above, who approved of it, but also from people who did not and were concerned about possible detrimental effects (see Bickford-Smith 1988:306, 313).

Stories are legion of how residents helped one another in times of need, were aware of one another's festival times and marked them appropriately, and were in a general if not

intimate way, friendly towards members of other religious groups. What emerges over and over in stories, memoirs and interviews concerning District Six is that the range of differences in faith and ethnic background was a source of pride as evidence of the successfully cosmopolitan nature of the area. An image often used to describe life there is that residents were 'one big family'. Manuel and Hatfield (1967:71-107) and Nasson (1987:18-25) give graphic descriptions of this family's accommodation of its eccentrics, of its wilder members and their escapades, and of its gangs and their clashes. (For a more detailed account of District Six gangs see Pinnock 1984:24-30.)

There are fewer accounts of social exclusiveness. Bickford-Smith's 1987 article is one: he cites examples of ethnic solidarity and mentions hierarchies of class and pigmentation that were evident in District Six in the first decade of this century (1987:20), but so far, the most detailed investigation of community relationships within District Six is Ridd's study. Her work gives a more multi-faceted image of relations between Muslims and Christians in the area, showing that there was distrust and deep-seated prejudice between some adherents of those two faiths (1981:372-406). She found the hostility more readily expressed by Christians towards Muslims than vice versa. (By the time she did her field work, there was no

longer a sizeable Jewish community. Most of the Jews had moved out by the end of the nineteen-forties.)

But even if one cannot establish exactly what the past was like, what is important is that the struggle to remain in District Six after 1966 forged a new kind of link among those who participated in the opposition to the forced removals, and so the struggle itself has consolidated certain kinds of memories and bonds. These in turn have an effect on language use because they have shaped attitudes towards the two languages and the local vernacular, primarily by hardening dislike of standard Afrikaans and reinforcing the covert value of the vernacular as a sign of solidarity among the oppressed. At this point let me briefly set in context the nature of the post-1966 'clearance' and mention the series of laws by which it was implemented.

As I indicated in 1.1 the area had been densely populated since the mid 19th century. Some residents owned their homes but most were in rented accommodation. During the time of the bubonic plague in 1901-2 many of the buildings were pulled down because they were thought to be health hazards, but within a few years the demand for cheap housing led to the building of hundreds more dwellings that were not well enough constructed to withstand the ravages of time and use. Between 1902 and the mid-1930s there was increasing pressure for racially

structured social control from more powerful interests who wanted Africans to be moved to residentially segregated 'black areas'. This was effective in forcibly removing blacks to Ndabeni and Langa. The original legitimising excuse was that, as they lived in over-crowded and dirty environments, they were likely to spread disease in epidemic proportions. There was conspicuous public silence on the question of why the rented accommodation for Africans was so appalling. (See Bickford Smith (1981), Van Heyningen (1981).)

During the nineteen-thirties and forties, in response to crowded conditions, families who could afford to do so moved voluntarily to areas where they would have more space, and their place was taken by poorer people (Pinnock 1981). Oral history records show that it was at this time that many Jewish residents left.

Landlords did not always see to the upkeep of their buildings and by the middle of this century many dwellings were unsafe or insanitary. This made it possible for slum clearance to be declared as a motive for razing buildings. Quoting a report to the City Council in 1940, Pinnock (1981) argues that drastic reshaping of District Six was planned at that time. Residents repeatedly petitioned for the buildings to be renovated and the occupants allowed to return. These requests fell on deaf ears. The slum clearance motivation for action was pushed at

the time when the area was proclaimed a 'white group area' under the Group Areas Act No 36 of 1966. The enforcement of the Population Registration Act of 1950 and its 1967 amendment resulted in the classification of the majority of District Six residents as 'coloured' or 'Indian'. The combination of the two Acts thus deprived an estimated 30,000 people of their right to live in District Six by declaring the area 'white' and the residents 'non-white'. Relocation scattered them.

A small section of District Six - twenty-one street blocks - lay outside the boundaries of the 1966 proclamation of the 'white' group area and was thus not razed with the rest (see Fig. 10 - aerial photograph - and Fig. 11). For the next sixteen years the fate of this section was left in the balance. In 1984 it was zoned as a Commercial Area as opposed to a Residential Area limited to the use of one or other population group, and so the occupants of the 220 houses located among factories, warehouses and shops were allowed to stay on. Their experience of being a threatened community affected residents' language use. In many cases it led to rejection of standard Afrikaans which they saw as the language of both the white nationalists who had framed the destructive laws, and of many of the officials who implemented them.